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NOVEMBER 1996

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NOVEMBER 1996

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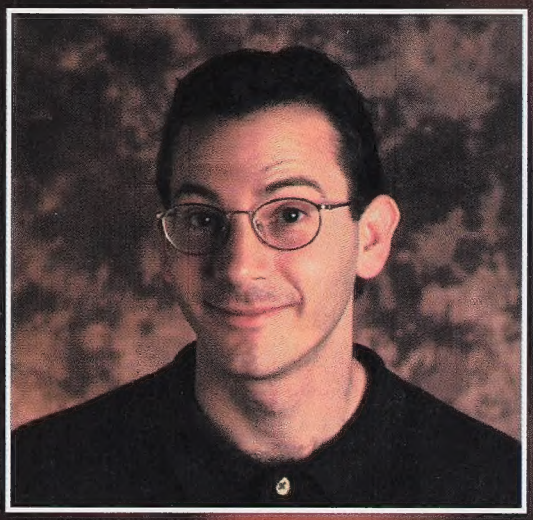
96 **MANGA SHI #1/2**
Mmm...sushi! This is your only chance to get the cultural Manga Shi #1/2 comic by the team of Tom Sniegoski, Jason Orsalas and Claude St. Aubin. And heck, even that swell Billy Tucci provides a brand-spankin'-new cover. So jump on the manga train and see why the whole comic industry's buzzin' about manga and a li'l warrior named Shi.

ON THE COVER:

SUPERMAN/LOIS by Stuart Immonen and Jose Marzan Jr., color by Twilight Graphics Inc.
WITCHBLADE by Michael Turner and Marc Silvestri, color by Top Cow

"PRETTY, PRETTY, PRETTY PLEASE? I'LL BE YOUR BEST FRIEND IF YOU SAY YES."



NO TRICKS, BUT PLENTY O' TREATS

This is going to be a very exciting month for comic books. Lots of new events are happening—the launch of "Heroes Reborn," the new toys (lots of 'em), the Hulk animated TV show and the return of the classic Peter Parker Spider-Man as seen in our die-cut chromium card in this issue.You'll see all the news in *Wizard* first as it unfolds.

Speaking of first, I was the first one, outside of Todd McFarlane and staff, to see the new "Spawn" movie costumes and to visit the set. I also got a chance to view some footage from the previous day's shooting (the opening scene) with the director, associate producer, Terry Fitzgerald and the tech wizard from ILM. This movie is gonna be great—we'll keep you updated along the way. John Leguizamo as the Violator is very cool.

This month in our Halloween issue of *Wizard*, we've got a special treat for you—a Witchblade cover by Mike Turner, who has done an awesome job. We also have an alternate cover with Superman and Lois kissing to celebrate their marriage. DC swore us to secrecy, so we couldn't tell anyone before, but here you have it with the complete rundown on the wedding of the century.

And what would our Halloween issue be without our annual Halloween Costume Contest? This year's entries are great. And let one of our expert entrants tell you how to make a costume. Also, read a great Q&A with Grant Morrison, telling you all about the new *JLA*.

You better send in for the *Manga Shi* #1/2—these babies are gonna fly off the shelf.

We also have a Toy Special coming out shortly. Make sure you pick it up—you'll have a great time with it. We laughed our way through the whole thing.

See ya,

Gareb S. Shamus

P.S. Get psyched for our *Wizard* Year-Ender!

P.P.S. With the Superman wedding happening, I thought it would be appropriate to follow in Supes' footsteps and ask, "Lisa, will you marry me?"

(She better say yes! I'll let you know next month.)

ABC MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN APPLIED FOR

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Stuff you don't ever read...

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{ and soar and spin and climb and dive and look way, way down on everything else }

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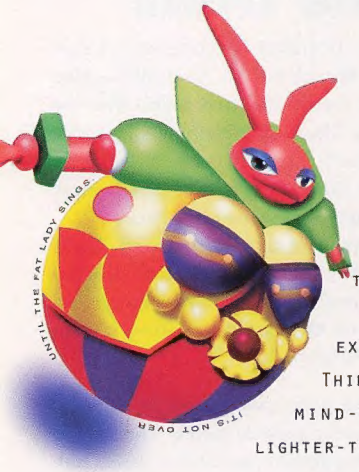

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MAGIC WORDS

You *Can* Handle the Truth!

The mail continues to roll in on the most popular feature we've run in many, many months: "You Can't Handle the Truth!"—the unresolved X-Men plots article that ran in *Wizard* #58. We've received an avalanche of mail on it, the likes of which we haven't seen since (ahem!) the first "When Titans Tussle" article back in *Wizard* #39. Most common letter? Looks like the general consensus is that Adam X-Treme is the mystery third Summers brother.

Another thing I'm seeing a lot of lately is a call to oust Todd McFarlane himself from our "Top 10 Hottest Artists" list due to the fact that he has no regular art assignment these days. However, our statistically determined survey tells us that he's *still* king o' the heap, regardless. Any thoughts? Lemme know.

Dear Ol' Mighty Wizard,
Whatever happened to the "Fantastic Four" movie? It never hit the theaters or even my VCR. What's going on here?

Jason Burris
Lamar, MO

The movie was so incredibly, horribly bad that it got shelved. It was never released anywhere. By the way and just so you know—comic movies are made to break your heart. You always want them, you always wait in breathless anticipation for them and they always suck.

Dear Jim McLauchlin,
I was astonished by Alex Ross and his artistic accomplishments on *Kingdom Come*. I think it is his best work since *Marvels*. I'd like to know what kind of paper, paints and brushes Alex uses to be able to render in his unique style.

Neeraj Patel
LaSalle, Quebec, Canada

Mr. Ross uses a series 7 red sable Windsor & Newton brush, which he says "most inkers use. It's held in extremely high regard among artists as being quality equipment." He uses gouache paints, which are an opaque watercolor type of paint. The paper he uses is Strathmore Bristol, series 500 regular finish 4-ply. He uses an Iwata airbrush with Badger air opaque paints for his airbrush work. Alex says he uses these specific materials because "that's what was passed on to me by Mark Chiarello. I learned a lot about painting and painting materials from him." Chiarello is a senior editor at DC Comics, and also a frequent freelancer with credits including projects as varied as DC Villains trading cards and Terminal City covers.

Dear Magic Words,
We all know that Reed Richards, Mr. Fantastic, can stretch. But how can his clothes stretch along with him? And while we're at it, how can The Invisible Woman's clothes become invisible?

And where does Professor Xavier get the money to buy the X-mansion, the Blackbird, the Danger Room and Cerebro? Does he make the X-Men get part-time jobs?

Brian Danganan
San Leandro, CA

The FF's clothing is made from a wonderful Reed Richards invention called "unstable molecules." In the Marvel Uni-

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verse, unstable molecules can do pretty much anything they're designed to, including stretch, turn invisible or not burn up when The Human Torch yells "Flame on!" Personally, I always wondered why Richards never made a tear-proof unstable molecule costume for his friend and ally, Spider-Man. The poor guy went through a lot of union suits.

Professor X is independently wealthy, although the source of his wealth has never been disclosed. So chances are, you'll never have to see Jubilee waiting tables or Cyclops shaking it as a Chippendales dancer.

Dear Wizard,
"Only Bucky stays dead" used to be Rule #1 in comic books. But now that Bucky is coming back in the "Heroes Reborn" thing, does that mean that the world is coming to an end?

Charlie D'Amico
Pensacola, FL
X Mimic CR@aol.com

Nah. It's a new and decidedly more female Bucky that will be appearing in the new Captain America, so all is still right with the world. The polar ice caps will not melt, we will not be set upon by plagues of locusts and the Earth will not crash into the sun. At least to the best of my knowledge.

All I know is when the world finally does end, I want good seats.

Dear Wizard People,
What are the different colors of Kryptonite? What does each one do to Superman? Are other Superbeings (Supergirl, Krypto, etc.) affected by it?

Chris Parker
Valley Mills, TX

Sit down. This is going to take a while. Kryptonite has come in the following 11 varieties:

Green, which can kill super-powered Kryptonians.

Red, which is the wild card and has a random effect on Kryptonians. (Like turning Supey into an eggplant.)

Gold, which permanently removes Kryptonian super-powers.

White, which kills all plant life. (Better than Ortho Weed-B-Gon and at a fraction of the price!)

Blue, which kills Bizarro life.

Silver, which is the cubic zirconia of Kryptonite. It turned out to be a hoax.

Jewel, which amplifies the mental powers of Phantom Zone prisoners. (Boy, that's useful. I'll take a six-pack.)

Bizarro Red, which affects normal humans as red Kryptonite affects Kryptonians. See "Red."

X-Kryptonite, which gives humans super-powers.

Magno-Kryptonite, which magnetically attracts anything from Krypton. And...

...Anti-Kryptonite, which affects non-super-powered Kryptonians as green Kryptonite affects super-powered Kryptonians.

As for other Super-fill-in-the-blanks, Supergirl, Krypto the Super-Dog and Beppo the Super-Monkey are Kryptonian, so they would be affected just like Superman would. Streaky the Super-Cat and Comet the Super-Horse are not Kryptonian, so you can treat them as "human" for effects.

Now that all that is said and done, disregard it all. Those are the "old" Kryptonite varieties. As of DC's 1986 The Man of Steel *rewrite, the only Kryptonite in the DC Universe is green. The above list is for old time's sake only.*

Oh, yeah—A special thanks goes out to DC's own Bizarro No. 1, Scott Nybakken, and his crack research team of evil monkeys for their help in compiling the list.

Hi, Comic Geeks,
How did they come up with the size of comic books?

David Bohlander
Great Falls, MT
DBohlander@aol.com

Good question. As near as we can tell,

THE BUNNY AWARD

Paul Schiraldi

Jim takes one of his favorite letters of the month and spotlights it here. There's no logic attached to this, nor is there a prize.

Dear Wizard,
This is a list of things I hate: Everything on MTV except the music videos, stupid comic fans who have no life, people who think that the X-Men is "fantasy" (try Stephen King's *Dark Tower* saga if you want real fantasy), turning Venom into a good guy, Trekkies and the Iron Man vs. X-Men debate. Oh, yeah—and that "Champagne Supernova" song.

Matt Muchowski
Gurnee, IL
PMUCHO@aol.com

Y'know, we did something kind of like this at my old job. Everyone would post Lists of Love on one wall and we'd post our Lists of Hate on the opposite wall. Every year on January 1, we'd tear down the old lists and put new ones up. It was a nice way to get some anger out in a socially acceptable way, and we all got a good laugh at the same time.

Personally, I hate everything on MTV including music videos, but I love stupid comic fans who have no life. They keep me in business. And yes, "Champagne Supernova" sucks serious sour frog-ass. If I hear one more person compare Oasis to The Beatles, I'm gonna hit them in the mouth with a hockey stick.

So, any Lists of Love out there?

when the first comics boom hit in the late 1930s, comics had stabilized at a 7 1/2-by-10 1/4 inch size after having erratic sizes in previous years. World War II and paper shortages cut down the dimension of comics to a narrower 6 7/8-by-10 1/4 by the mid-1940s.

As time went by, another eighth of an inch or two has been shaved off periodically, to the point where today's standard comics measure at a uniform 6 5/8-by-10 1/4 inches.

Note that the height of comics (10 1/4 inches) has remained constant. Only the width has changed. Why? Well, the rolls of paper fed into printing presses are still the same. The width has been cut down so that publishers can yield more pages from a sheet. Comics have become narrower strictly for economic reasons.

Dear Wizard People,

In *Wizard* #59, Mark Wilson wrote in and asked you to make fun of him. You refused. I, however, am prepared to fulfill his wish and make fun of him. So here it goes, Mark: You are ugly, stupid and nobody likes you. You are also very weird if you want to be made fun of.

James Casby
Worchester, MA

Thanks for stepping up to the plate, James. I've been on the heckling disabled list for the past 60 days, but I'm now back in action and ready to roll.

Dear Jim,

I've been sitting here thinking about my latest failed relationship, looking through all the old letters she'd sent me (Yes, I kept them all), and I got to thinking: Which is better, comics or girls?

This may seem like an absurd question, but think about it: Sure, comics don't tell you they love you, but they're always there for you and they never break your heart and leave you a broken hollow shell of the man you once were.

So which is it?

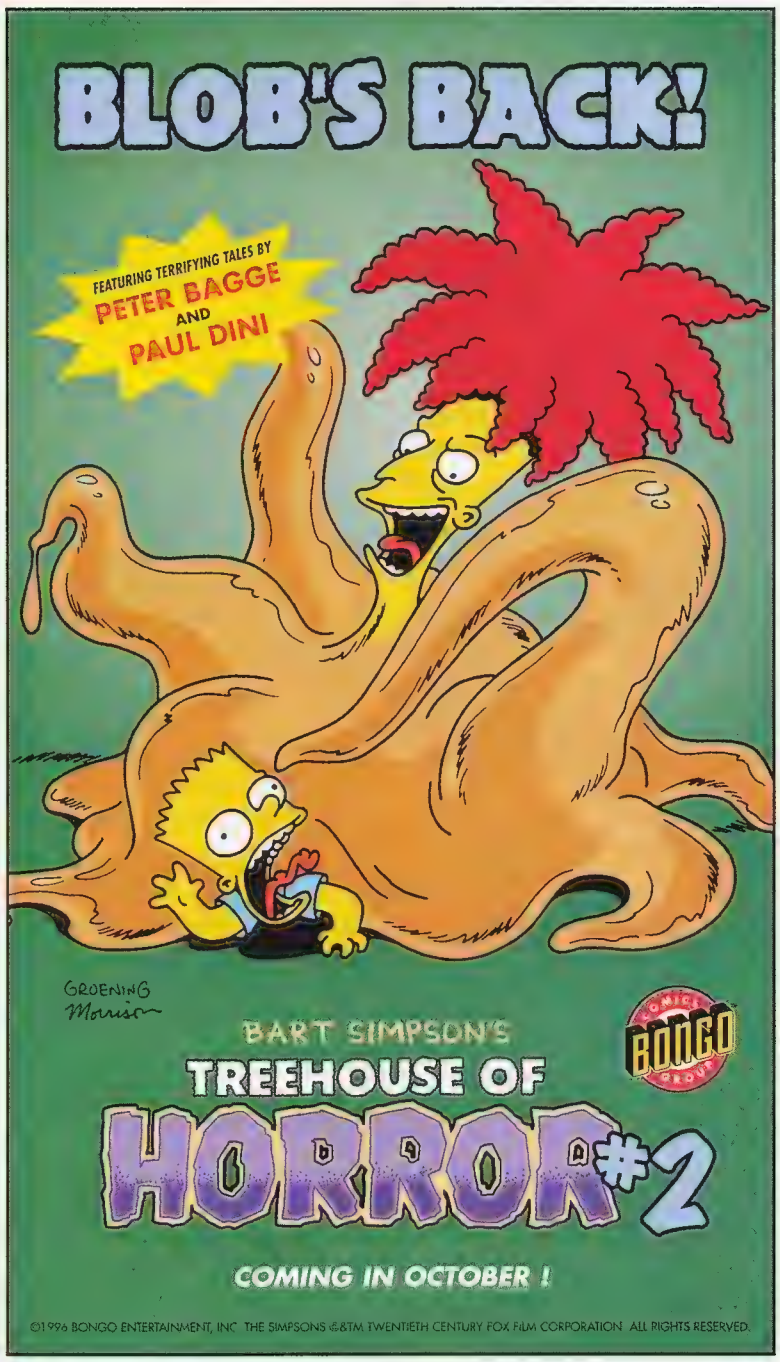
Dave Amiott
Painesville, OH

Girls.

Just in case you didn't get that, allow me to reiterate: Girls.

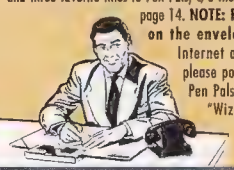
Now once more, with feeling, just to drive the point home: GIRLS!

True, comics may never dump you for a better-looking geek, but girls are much better for companionship, conversation, beating at ping-pong, tongue-kissing, friendship and just having someone to rely on. To say noth-



Hey! It's Pen Pals

Meet your fellow comic fans! Send your name, address, age, gender and three favorite titles to Pen Pals, c/o the Magic Words address on page 14. **NOTE: Please write your age on the envelope.** If you want your Internet address listed instead, please post your info in the new Pen Pals message board on our "Wizard World" forum on America Online. Hey, make a friend!



P E N P A L S

Paul Pownall
Age: 15 Sex: Male
HC 78, Box 21 A
Shanks, WV 26761
Likes: all *Star Wars* titles, Spider-titles, X-titles

David Morrisey
Age: 17 Sex: Male
308 S. Highland St.
Arlington, VA 22204
Likes: *Cyberforce*, *Gen*[13], all Image titles

Kevin Utley
Age: 23 Sex: Male
P.O. Box 613
Leighton, AL 35646
Likes: *Superman*, *Pitt*, Bat-titles

Seth "Frank" Fried
Age: 12 Sex: Male
7179 Kenilworth
Lamberiville, MI 48144
Likes: *Spawn*, *Venom*, *Ren & Stimpy*

Dillon Chaffey
Age: 14 Sex: Male
RR #1 North Sydney
Nova Scotia, Canada B2A 3L7
Likes: *Grendel*, *Sandman*, *The Maxx*

Rose DiPaolo
Age: 14 Sex: Female
Box 134
Dumont, CO 80436
Likes: *Shi*, *Ghost*, *Gen*[13]

Kelly Fitzgerald
Age: 13 Sex: Male
5848 Hollywood P.K. C.T. S.E.
Lacey, WA 98513
Likes: All X-titles, *Gen*[13], *Bone*

ing of the fact that they can keep you warm at night.

It really shouldn't even be a question. Get with the program there, pal.

Dear Wizard,

When someone says "Mind your P's & Q's," what are the P's and the Q's?

Scott Gullicks
Duluth, MN

The "P's" are pints and the "Q's" are quarts. Way back in ye olden days, when you'd walk into a bar, you'd write your name on a chalkboard. Every time you'd order a pint, a server would put a tally mark by your name in a column with a header that said "P." Similarly, if you ordered a quart, a mark would go next to your name in the "Q" column. At the end of your drinking binge, you'd count up the marks and pay your bill based on how many P's and Q's you had. When someone tells you to "mind your P's & Q's," it's a dual warning: Make sure you don't spend too much, and make sure you don't drink too much. It's good advice.

Dear Mr. McLauchlin,

Who would you rather be, Pocahontas or the Hunchback of Notre Dame?

Andrew McCash
Burr Ridge, IL

I'd much rather be Pocahontas, 'cause then I'd have that great hairdo and Neil Young would have written a song about me.

Dear Wizard,

I've been a reader of your entertaining magazine for years and I have two questions for you.

1) Who created the Silver Sable character?

2) Do you know why Marvel canceled *Web of Spider-Man?*

Chris Dunn
Oceanside, CA

Heck, I've been writing for this magazine for years and I have a two answers for you.

1) Who cares?

2) They canceled Web to make room for the new Sensational Spider-Man, which launched in November, 1995.

Dear Mr. McLauchlin,

Is there a book that teaches you how to draw Japanese comics?

Angelo Vilar
Glendale, CA
EDISONVLR@aol.com

Yeah, but it's in Japanese, so you probably couldn't read it anyway.

Jim,

While reading the letters column in *Wizard* #60, a strange thought crept into my cranium. The thought inquired of me: Am I a fanboy?

Now of course, for ego's sake, I said to myself, quite quietly so as not to attract attention, "Bah! Truly I am not! I have a girlfriend, I dislike Spawn, and I only wear that Gambit T-shirt to bed now! Cease these silly inquiries at once, creeping thought!"

But then I looked at my selection of books from the past month. *Uncanny X-Men. Gen^{13}. Wizard?!?* Are these the choices of a non-fanboy? Sure, I cherish *Bone, Sin City, Milk and Cheese, Madman* and *Starman*, but I usually wait for a trade paperback to come out so I can enjoy these books to the maximum extent possible. And my memorization skills on certain dialogue lines is a little too keen. I can remember the dialogue between Captain America and Diamondback from *Cap* #382, for God's sake! What I am trying to say is that my line between fanboy and lover of sequential art is blurred to a point of indistinguishability (if that is indeed a word).

What I propose is an article or perhaps a chart explaining the major differences between these two sects. Perhaps a "You Might Be a Fanboy If..." kind of thing. It might be a good idea to satisfy those among us who would like to say "I'm not a geek!" but fear that they may, in fact, just be in a deep state of denial.

Jeff Holland
Treyholl@aol.com

If you refer to yourself as a "lover of sequential art," you are a geek. If you can remember dialogue between Captain America and Diamondback from Cap #382, you are an incurable fanboy. Please check your semblance-of-a-life at the door and report immediately to the nearest Betty Ford Clinic for treatment.

But I will tell you one thing—waiting to buy trade paperback collections of your favorites is a good idea. That way, you can save money and buy more comics. I do the same thing myself. But it's not as if I'm a fanboy, though. Honest. Really. I'm not. Really.

Dear Wizard,

I seem to remember Superman having a huge key to his Fortress of Solitude. But where does he keep such a huge key? In his pants?

John Patterson
Dover, NH
COCKDOG@aol.com

No, it's not in his pants. He's just happy to see you.

Actually, he kept it sitting out in the open on top of a mountain near the Fortress. The thing was so darned big and so darned heavy that Supes figured that only he could pick it up anyway, so there was no need to secure the key.

PENPALS

Wanda Brunson
Age: 20 Sex: Female
311 TRS Box #1557
Presidio of Monterey, CA 93944
Likes: X-titles, *Gen^{13}*, *Lady Death*

John Cook
Age: 23 Sex: Male
P.O. Box 1032
Newport, OR 97365
Likes: *X-Men*, *Gen^{13}*, *Spawn*

David L. Radley
Age: 14 Sex: Male
177 Jubilee St.
Stepney, London, England E1 3AT
Likes: *Impulse*, *Green Lantern*, *Gen^{13}*

Laurie Hiatt
Age: 15 Sex: Female
P.O. Box 156
Cove, OR 97824
Likes: manga, most anime, *Robotech*

Patrick Tully
Age: 14 Sex: Male
scktully@sonnet.com
Likes: all X-titles, *Impulse*, *Green Goblin*

Kevin Burza
Age: 14 Sex: Male
PSU RED 95@aol.com
Likes: all X-titles, *Spider-Man*, *Wolverine*

Sam Williams
Age: 21 Sex: Male
dorgorpon@aol.com
Likes: *Hate*, *Madman*, *Sin City*

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-MARK 13:20

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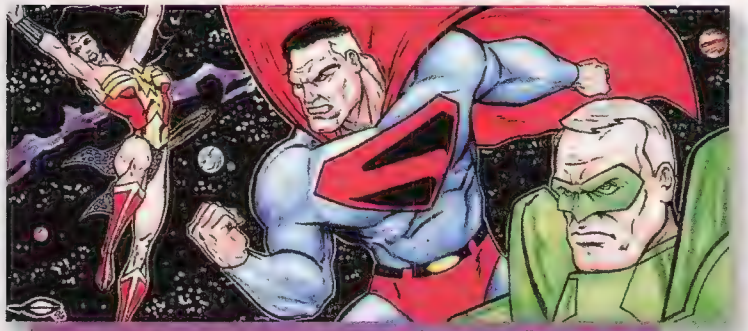
LETTER ART

Fans who got their letter art printed this month will each receive a Bronze *Fantastic Four* #1 Mint-Card, a copy of this issue of *Wizard* signed by the entire *Wizard* creative staff, and a funky *Wizard* cap! The creator of the best envelope wins the issue and cap, plus a Silver *Fantastic Four* #1 Mint-Card! (Thanks for the loot, Highland Mint!) Artists: Please include a clearly printed return address on the *back* of your envelope.

envelope of the month

BEAUTY& THE BEASTS Bob Cook



KINGDOM COME Gary Lister

ROGUE & GAMBIT VS. EVERYONE Greg Bailey

SCUD VS. JIM Jared Souza

more letters from beyond the grave

THE PRIZE

Dear Wizard,

What other things does *Wizard* have their hands into?

Derrick Samuels
Midway, TX

Our plans for world domination continue, albeit rather slowly. All we have our hands in these days is cookie dough. It's mighty tasty, though.

Dear Wizard,

Okay, now that we know there will be an X-Men/"Star Trek" team-up, what other Marvel/"Trek" team-ups can we look towards in the future? Perhaps Galactus vs. Q? Wolverine vs. Worf? Nightcrawler vs. the transporter room to see who can teleport the fastest? Banshee vs. Scotty in a Scotch-drinking contest? Picard vs. Xavier in a battle of the shiny heads?

This whole Marvel/Paramount deal has opened a big can of worms.

Eric F. Roman
Midwest City, OK
EFROMAN@aol.com

You darned tootin' it has. For the record, my picks in your battles are as follows: Q, Wolverine, Nightcrawler, Scotty and Xavier.

Dear Wizard,

Are you going to keep Wolverine the way he is now or are you going to change him back?

Greg Dennis
Maple, WI

Ah, I think I'll keep him the way he is for a while.

However, there is an imperative need for me to preserve my sanity. So I'm outta here for the month. Until issue #64, I remain...

—Jim McLauchlin

If he only had the power, Jim McLauchlin would destroy all morning-drive radio.

ATTENTION, JASON R. PORTER!

You met our own Gareb Shamus at the San Diego Con and asked to be a Pen Pal, but we need your full address and three favorite titles! Please send the info to Pen Pals at the address below—thanks!

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SPIDER-MAN Tangles with Gen[13]

Captain Gouda invades Earth, plans to conquer and subjugate mankind. "My constipation gun cannot be defeated! Prepare for supreme colon blockage!" raved binding madman.

Concrete deflowers Scrappy Doo, puppy with a heart of gold. "That poor little doggie never stood a chance! That brick guy was like an unmerciful deflowering machine!" choked scarred-for-life bystander.

Sales at local comic con hit all-time high. "I'll take these two," said Zimbu the giggly Martian. "But those Tekno comics ain't part o' the deal."

Spidey will be hanging with Image's superpowered, teen-team **Gen[13]** this November.

Marvel's wall-crawler and **WildStorm**'s teen sensation will be crossing over in a 48-page one-shot written by **Peter David** (*Incredible Hulk, Supergirl*) and penciled by **Stuart Immonen** (*Adventures of Superman*).

"I thought I'd do a solid, straight-forward adventure yarn," said David. "The general theme of the story is 'Who do you trust?' "

Spider-Man/Gen[13] will jump directly into the action with a disoriented Spider-Man waking up to find himself targeted for assassination by a villain named Glider. Gen[13] will then enter the picture to save Spidey...and that's just the beginning. Throughout the story, both Spider-Man and Gen[13] will be wondering just how Spidey was thrust into the middle of this predicament, but more importantly, can they trust each other?

"There is dissent within Gen[13] as to whether this is a set-up, whether they can trust Spider-Man," said David. "Or whether this is all part of some scheme."

Both David and Immonen decided to take on the crossover based on the fact that both Gen[13] and Spider-Man are fun characters to work with. "I think they're all honest characters, not the angry superheroes that unfortunately pervade most of the industry, and that's really refreshing," said Immonen. "Gen[13] embody the same kind of values that Spider-Man did and still does. They're out there having fun."

The crossover was sparked from the new relationship between Marvel Comics and both WildStorm Studios and **Extreme Studios**. Earlier in the year, stemming from the "**Heroes Reborn**" alliance, Marvel and WildStorm had agreed upon a set number of character crossovers in 1996 and even more in 1997. ***Spider-Man/Backlash*** and ***Deathblow/Wolverine*** are two additional crossovers slated to be published in 1996.

"Spidey/Gen[13] is one of the most obvious [crossovers], in that Spidey is probably Marvel's flagship character right now and *Gen[13]* is WildStorm's best-selling team book," said **Tom Brevoort**, Marvel editor of the one-shot. "They are both characters that are fairly young, quick-witted and the styles of both series seem to mix together real well."

The crossover will not spend any time attempting to justify the merging of the Marvel and WildStorm Universes. *Spider-Man/Gen[13]* avoids the continuity issue and simply accepts the premise that all the characters exist in the same reality for the duration of the book. "We're assuming they have heard of each other, but have just never ran into each other before," said Brevoort. "In a basic sense, it's a story where you go in and simply have a good time. It's a light-hearted 48-page wild and fun romp!"

■ *Matthew Senreich (with additional reporting by Patrick O'Neill)*

ahead

LIEFELD LEAVES IMAGE!

SHI/DAREDEVIL CROSSOVER!

PETER DAVID ON 'SUPERGIRL'!

AND COMPANY UPDATES!

Tucci Realizes Dream Project with Daredevil Crossover

Billy Tucci gets to realize a lifelong dream with the **Shi/Daredevil** crossover coming this December.

Tucci—who used Daredevil penciling samples in his attempt to break into the comic book industry four years ago—will get a chance to draw the Man without Fear in a two-part crossover. "This is something that makes my career complete—to be able to work with my favorite character of all time, Daredevil...and then Shi," said Tucci. "Both characters I hold really close to my heart."

The story will both fit into Daredevil continuity and have drastic effects upon the Shi Universe. The first arc of the crossover, *Daredevil/Shi: Blind Faith*, will be published by Marvel Comics. *Shi/Daredevil: Honor Thy Mother* will be put out by Crusade two weeks later. "The two characters are just so alike, and were made to cross over," said Tucci. "Both are characters who are realistic—no superpowers—and are always searching for who they are."

Stemming directly from the events of *Shi* #12, *Daredevil/Shi* will continue to follow the trial of Detective Pete DeNyse, the romantic interest of **Ana Ishikawa** (a.k.a. Shi). **Matt Murdock** will actually be working against Pete in the courtroom.

Written by **Tom Sniegoski** and **Chris Golden**, with Jamal Igle on pencils, Marvel's *Blind Faith* is also placed within the current story arc of the ongoing *Daredevil* series, featuring characters such as **Razor Sharp**. "Bill Tucci allowed us to do something extraordinary in comparison to other crossovers," said Golden. "He's letting us write an essential part of Shi continuity."

The Crusade edition features the artwork of Bill Tucci and is written by Tucci along with **Peter Gutierrez**. A key aspect of the crossover will focus on the return of **The Hand** (from the old Daredevil stories) to lure Shi into their ranks. She's filled with doubt as The Hand zeroes in on her, setting the stage for Daredevil to enter. "Daredevil's the savior of the lost souls of New York City," said Tucci. "Ana just happens to be one of those lost souls."

The ramifications from the crossover will have some long-lasting effects in the Shi Universe. "Pete will go through some serious changes at the end of this," added Tucci. "So basically, the stuff in this crossover will leave the Shi story shaken up a bit." ■ *Matthew Senreich*

Loeb Ends Reign on *Cable, X-Force*

Jeph Loeb is leaving the X-family.

Loeb will end his three-year reign on both ***Cable*** and ***X-Force*** with the November issues of both titles. *Cable* #38 and *X-Force* #61 will officially conclude his monthly writing assignments on the books. Loeb departs to pursue two new year-long projects, DC's ***Batman: The Long Halloween*** and Marvel's ***Captain America***.

"What I've basically done is gone from four monthly books to two monthly books which is good," said Loeb. "I originally had two monthly books, so I'm staying consistent."

Citing a desire to explore new challenges and possibilities in the comic book medium, Loeb leaves the X-offices on good terms. He described his tenure on *Cable* and *X-Force* as being fulfilling and expressed sadness over his decision to depart.

" I really just feel that I have told the best stories I could tell on *Cable* and *X-Force* for right now," he said.

"Jeph wanted to do other things," said Marvel Editor-in-Chief **Bob Harras**. "It was his decision to leave, and we'll miss him on both *Cable* and *X-Force*."

Loeb now focuses his energy on the "Heroes Reborn" *Captain America* (first issue set to ship in September) and *Batman: The Long Halloween* (scheduled to hit stands in October). "I think the majority of my leaving has to do with these Cap and Batman projects," said Loeb. "I just realized that there's a lot of stuff going on out there that goes beyond what was the greatest gig in the world."

Does Loeb hope to one day return to *Cable* or *X-Force*? "I'm a big believer in doing something well, then going away for a while...and that doesn't mean I'm not going to return to these characters, so we'll have to see." said Loeb.

"My father always believed in leaving the party while it was roaring and not being the last one out the door," said Loeb. "And that's what I'm doing." ■ *Matthew Senreich*

BUZZ BOX

The inside scoop on the comic industry

• Some of **Marvel**'s top creators will be changing titles. Marvel has confirmed that **Andy Kubert** will move to ***Ka-Zar*** in 1997, while rumor has it that **Carlos Pacheco** will be placed on ***X-Men*** and **Adam Kubert** will leave his ***Wolverine*** post to do ***Incredible Hulk***.

• Speaking of the **Hulk**, insiders at **Marvel** say he'll be a major player at the end of the first 12-month run of "**Heroes Reborn**."

• Is **Top Cow Comics** in **Marvel**'s future? There has been much speculation that there will be an arrangement between the two, with Top Cow becoming more of an art studio, while Marvel will retain editorial control. No word from the companies involved.

• The only place you'll see swastikas in **Rob Liefeld**'s ***Captain America*** will be on the inside pages. An edict from **Marvel** forbade the use of the symbols on any covers or trading cards.

• **Shi**, **Ash** and **Grifter** duking it out in one CCG? Maybe, as rumors swirl about **Fleer** producing a game called *CrossOverPower*, an expansion set to *Marvel OverPower*, speculated to include characters from **Event Comics**, **Crusade**, **High Impact** and **WildStorm**.

New Spawn Title Slated for October

October spawns a new Spawn mini-series!

Todd McFarlane Productions will release a new three-issue fully painted Spawn mini-series entitled ***Spawn the Impaler***. Written by **Mike Grell** and painted by **Rob Prior**, the 96-page story will give a new spin on the Vlad Tepes mythos (Dracula).

"Instead of it being 'What if Vlad Tepes was actually a vampire,' it's 'What if he were a Spawn?' " said Prior. "A simple twist of perspective."

Similar to ***Curse of the Spawn***, the mini-series will focus on the premise that Spawns have existed throughout time. In fact, the story will span several centuries, with its roots being both in the distant past and in the near future.

"At first, Todd and I thought a story I wrote would fit into *Curse of the Spawn*," said Grell. "But as it developed, Todd and I realized it was a great opportunity to do something he's never done before...a fully painted Spawn book."

Spawn the Impaler will feature Prior's fully painted artwork which can be seen on many Lucasfilm projects such as the new *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* poster. Similar to **Alex Ross**, Prior does photo realistic painting. "I guess you can say this series is a cross between some photo realism [like *Kingdom Come*] and some personal stylized stuff," said Prior. "But due to time restraints, the whole book can't be photo real."

According to Grell, **Al Simmons** will make a brief cameo appearance in the series. "Since it begins at a time before the contemporary series and goes beyond it, I'll touch on Al Simmons in a historical manner, allowing him to make an interesting sort of cameo," said Grell.

The mini-series, as with all *Spawn* titles, promises to be dark and compelling. "I don't know if it's necessarily a darker story than any of the Al Simmons stories," said Grell. "But don't look for a happy ending." ■ *Matthew Senreich*

WildStorm Editor Samples 'The Real World'

Who says comic books aren't part of the real world?

Sarah Becker, an editor at **WildStorm Productions**, can be seen every Wednesday night at 10 p.m. on **MTV**'s "**Real World V**" in Miami. "They'll probably portray me as a goofy 12-year-old that all she cares about is her toys and comic books," Becker said. "Not annoying, but just in my own little world. And that's awesome. It's the best way to be."

With **Jim Lee**'s permission, Becker took an extended leave of absence from WildStorm to be a part of the "Real World" cast. "It was almost like summer camp. You leave with what you put into it," Becker said. "For me personally, it was like a five-month vacation and now I'm back to work."

One of seven strangers picked to live in a house and have her life video taped, Becker is placing the comic book industry into the mainstream culture spotlight. The first episode featured a few shots of the WildStorm offices and a raging comic book party at Becker's San Diego home, where comic book professionals graced the background. Ironically, Becker and four housemates—including **Gen**^{13} artist **J. Scott Campbell**—got evicted because of the party. As a result, Sarah and her four WildStorm housemates (whom MTV overlooked), were left homeless.

"I don't know if comic books will be played up a lot, but comics definitely deserve some serious props," said Becker. "Maybe people'll like some of the drawings they see. I actually hung up my room like my office with comic stuff." In addition, Becker intentionally pushed comic books on her housemates. "I introduced Joe [a roommate from Brooklyn] to Gen^{13} and he is convinced that he is going to marry Caitlin Fairchild. That is his beloved right now. And Flora [a roommate from Russia] is convinced she is Caitlin. They were definitely not into comic books till I got down there."

As if living together was not enough, the cast members formed a business as well. What kind? The answer is a secret, but Becker can only say, "Think comic book industry. Just think the state of the industry."

So is Becker worried about how she's going to come across to viewers of the "Real World"?

"I'm not even sweating it," Becker said. "I have no regrets." ■ *Matthew Senreich*

We Looked It Up

Dorm•am•mu (Door ma moo) *Marvel Universe* 1 The sometimes-ruler of the Dark Dimension and creator of the barrier that keeps the Mindless Ones at bay 2 Flame-enshrouded sorcerer expelled from the Faltine dimension who once challenged Eternity for rulership of all there is, and lost 3 Place on college campus where a cow's mother can stay

Marvel Editor Mark Gruenwald Dies

Marvel Comics Senior Executive Editor, **Mark Gruenwald**, died at his home in Pawling, N.Y., on August 12. Gruenwald suffered a heart attack and was 43 years old.

Gruenwald spent the entirety of his professional life in comics on staff at Marvel, having joined the company as an assistant editor in 1978. Prior to that, he had been a prominent fan and fanzine contributor. His fanzines *Omniverse* and *Alternity* were among the first serious efforts to explain the nature of parallel worlds in comics.

That interest in continuity and explanation served Gruenwald well in one of his major projects at Marvel, ***The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe***. He also wrote and/or edited a number of other titles, including ***The Avengers***, ***West Coast Avengers*** and ***Iron Man***, as well as wrote ***Captain America*** longer than any other writer in the character's 56-year history.

"It can be said without reservation that Mark embodied the spirit of what we like to think Marvel is and should be," said Editor-in-Chief **Bob Harras**.

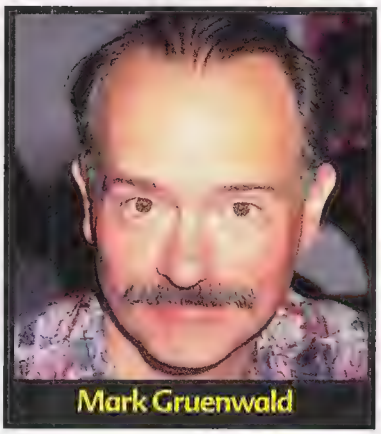


Photo by Al Ortega

Mark Gruenwald

Writer/artist **Walt Simonson** concurred: "Mark was a perfect combination of fan and professional. He could write and he could edit, and he brought a fan's enthusiasm and breadth of knowledge about comics to his work. On a personal note, Mark was the editor who offered me ***The Mighty Thor***, a series on which I think I produced some of my best work. His loss is a personal loss and a major blow to Marvel and the industry at large."

Even the competition shared in the loss. DC's Group Editor **Mike Carlin**—who broke into the business as Gruenwald's assistant and remained a long-time friend—praised Gruenwald's ability to excite the reader. "The greatest thing about working with Mark Gruenwald was the sheer joy he got from comics," said Carlin. "And the joy and excitement he was able to communicate in his work, both writing and editing."

But perhaps the most moving tribute came from Marvel's founding father, **Stan Lee**: "Mark was that most valuable of creative executives, a virtual rock, steady, reliable, dependable—always there with an answer to a problem, a suggestion for how to make things better and a spirit of cooperation that was as warm and as genuine as his smile itself."

Gruenwald is survived by his parents, Myron and Norma, his wife, Catherine, and his daughter, Sara. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

Question of the Month

Spider-Man, Spider-Man…does whatever a spider can…Anyway, if you didn't know, Peter Parker is scheduled to return to his classic Spider-Man roots this October in *Spider-Man #75*. So we thought we'd use our "Wizard World" forum on America Online to ask a few questions about the future of Spidey. The question we asked alla youse was:

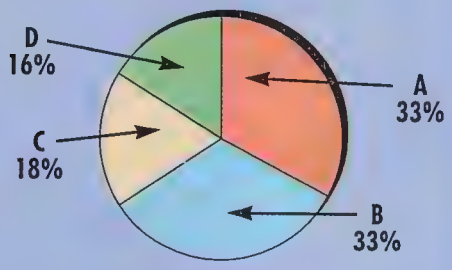
If you were the editor of the Spider-Man books, how would you resolve the clone saga?

A) Ben Reilly dies a heroic death as Spider-Man.

B) Ben Reilly retires as Spider-Man, but becomes a different costumed adventurer.

C) Ben Reilly is exposed as the clone, turns bad and Spider-Man has to take him down.

D) Ben Reilly just goes away.



We also asked our online friends their opinions on the following questions:

• Would you like to see Mary Jane out of Peter Parker's life: Yes **(13%)** or No **(87%)**?

The few who thought Mary Jane should get out of Peter's life were mostly those who wanted to see Peter become a single parent. However, the majority of responses seemed to think that Mary Jane and Peter Parker are made to stay together. As one fan posted, "Mary Jane is an integral part of the Spider-Man mythos! They've been through a horrible ordeal together and they deserve to share happiness together."

• Would you like to see Peter Parker as a father: Yes **(90%)** or No **(10%)**?

The abundance of fans may have agreed that Peter Parker should become a father, but there was a wide range of debate on whether his child should be normal **(55%)** or a mutant **(45%)**. And the biggest debate on the subject centered on baby Spidey's gender…most fans seemed to want a baby girl **(69%)**. ■ *Sorrell Booke*

SPOTLIGHT ON:

CREATOR: Chris Crosby
PUBLISHER: SCC Entertainment
CURRENT ISSUES: In November, *Scorn Lingerie Special '96* will hit the stands. *Scorn: Heatwave #1* is scheduled to come out in December along with *Those Aliens Attack!*, featuring an appearance by Snap the Punk Turtle.
BACK ISSUES: A whole bunch of *Snap the Punk Turtle* comics published by Super Crew Comics which includes Snap mini-comics and conversion specials. Crosby's work was also included in CFD's Comic Book Legal Defense Fund benefit book, *In Rage*. His Victor P. Turtle (Snap's nephew) enjoyed a cameo in Crusade Comics' *Shi/Cyblade* ("He got to touch Griffer's trench coat!").

Catching Up With...

PETER DAVID AND *SUPERGIRL*

Reunited with Gary Frank and Cam Smith (with whom he had a long run on Marvel's *The Incredible Hulk*), Peter David is now breathing new life into an old spin-off concept: Supergirl. The Maid of Might is once again known as Linda Danvers, having accidentally merged with the body and consciousness of a human girl. Her powers seemingly remain unchanged, although her ability to morph into new forms is somewhat altered (at least as we can tell so far). *Wizard* asked the "writer of stuff" about his approach to the character.

WIZARD: Why, when you accepted the assignment for *Supergirl*, did you decide to merge her with a human girl?

DAVID: I had trouble connecting, on an emotional and creative level, with a character who is essentially a blob of protoplasm that coincidentally is in the shape of a human female. I really couldn't wrap myself around that, and I felt I would be able to connect better with the character if she had some sort of personal stake in humanity. That meant bringing her as close to being human as we could possibly make her, and making that one of the linchpins of the series.

In her previous incarnations—back when she was Kara Zor-El—the creative teams for Supergirl seemed to have difficulty finding a milieu, a background, for the character that worked. What background do you plan to develop for Linda Danvers?

Her base of operations is a small town called Leesburg. One of the things that always intrigued me about superheroes is that, when they operate out of a city, all kinds of weird stuff happens in that city, and no one ever remarks upon it. Leesburg is sort of a deconstruction of that. It seems to be a perfectly normal town—and then stuff started happening. So Leesburg's citizens start to realize that everything was normal until Supergirl got there. And in a subsequent issue, we will explain what is going on and whether Supergirl's arrival triggered these events.

You want to avoid having Supergirl in a big city, because you want to avoid the inevitable comparisons with Superman. But if you have her in a small town, you have to come up with a rational explanation—or at least an interesting *irrational* explanation—for why this perfectly normal town suddenly has supervillains, gorillas and giant chemical creatures descending upon it.

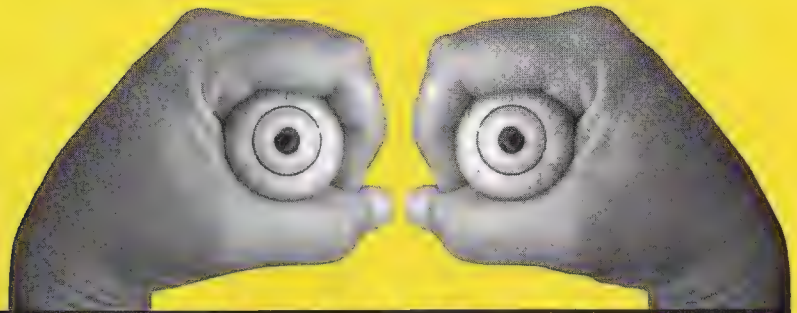
How much connection will you have to the rest of the Superman Universe?

Supergirl does have a history with Superman and connections to people in that world that have to be honored and adhered to—the Kents and Superman himself, for instance. The Kents will show up in issue #5 and Superman in #6. But we don't have any extensive tie-ins.

What about Luthor?

Luthor is not coming into the book at the present time. I think that relationship has been done to death. Similarly, there are still questions about her origins and the pocket universe and all that, but we ain't gonna answer them in this book. I'd like to move on to other stuff rather than dwell on the past. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

Photo by Al Ortega



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Liefeld Leaves Image

After a frequently tumultuous and often controversial five-year tenure, Image Comics publisher Rob Liefeld has resigned from the company he helped co-found.

Liefeld announced the decision September 4, faxing a letter of resignation minutes before a meeting of Image shareholders was held to discuss Liefeld's future with the company. Sources indicate that Liefeld's termination was on the agenda.

At the meeting, Image shareholders approved a resolution to terminate Liefeld as a member of the Board of Directors. Liefeld chose not to attend the meeting but was represented by his attorney.

"I'm not even sure yet why I resigned from Image," said Liefeld. "This is just a very unfortunate thing and a difficult decision for me. As far as I'm aware, I'm leaving on good terms and I hold no ill will. Image still remains very important to me, but I can't say that I wasn't pressured into this decision."

While Liefeld would not provide specific reasons for his resignation, a string of events over the last six months led up to the announcement.

Recent sales on Extreme comics have not maintained the profitability that other Image books have. When *Youngblood* #1 debuted in 1992, over 600,000 copies were sold, more than any non-Marvel or DC comic has ever sold. Currently, Extreme's best-selling titles struggle to crack the top 100. Meanwhile, Jim Lee's top book, *Gen*[13], and Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* have remained consistent best-sellers since their entrance in the marketplace.

Public battles with Image co-owners Jim Valentino and Marc Silvestri. Days before his resignation, Liefeld informed Valentino that he was replacing him as scripter for the Heroes Reborn project *The Avengers* but offered him the opportunity to remain as plotter. Valentino declined, choosing to resign from the project. He also charged Liefeld for non-payment for portions of the project. "One expects to be paid for work that one does," said Valentino. "And I wasn't paid for the last six pages of *Avengers* #3 and all of the fourth issue and I kept getting the runaround."

Liefeld denied all allegations, claiming that Valentino has been paid in full for all work completed on *Avengers*, and refuting claims that Extreme Studios is having financial difficulties. "We have the paperwork, the canceled checks, the vouchers," said Liefeld. "To say that Jim Valentino has not been paid for his work at Extreme Studios is a complete fallacy. I sign all the checks and they go out every Friday."

Silvestri—another founding father in the

company—resigned from Image Comics in June, targeting Liefeld as the reason for his departure. "There was just a clash between myself and one other person at Image," said Silvestri at the time. "And that clash kind of brought the final decision to leave to a head for me. I've been talking to Jim and Rob...[pause] I mean Jim and Todd [McFarlane]. Well, I think that answers your question."

Silvestri—who remains a shareholder in the company despite resigning from the Board of Directors—attended the shareholders meeting, fueling speculation that he will return to the Image fold. Sources indicated that it is likely Silvestri will return to Image.

The recent shift of books solicited through *Diamond Previews* from the Image-sponsored Extreme Comics to a new division of Liefeld's Maximum Press line, entitled Maximum Heroes, which operates independent of Image.

All Extreme books solicited under the Image heading will still be fulfilled, according to Liefeld.

Liefeld's Heroes Reborn project has also been marked by controversy. Fan reaction has been lukewarm while rumors of Liefeld's inability to meet deadlines have been rampant. Additionally, Chuck Dixon resigned from his writing stint on *Captain America*, citing creative differences with Rob Liefeld prior to Valentino's departure from *The Avengers*. Liefeld denied reports of any deadline problems concerning the book. Jeph Loeb—who is already scripting *Captain America*—has since signed on as writer for *Avengers*.

Liefeld was quick to point out that his departure from Image will have no bearing on the Heroes Reborn project.

"Heroes Reborn was not a deal done through Image Comics, it was a deal done with Rob Liefeld and Jim Lee, who just happened to be Image partners," said Jim Lee. "So that shouldn't change."

"I've spoken to Marvel. It was a huge priority to talk to them," said Liefeld. "I wanted to let them know it would not change our ability to do these books and they have no problem with it."

For the founding members of Image, emotions were varied about the departure of the frequently cantankerous Liefeld. "Some people are breaking out the champagne bottle and some are taking it close to heart," said co-founder Erik Larsen.

For Liefeld, the process took an emotional toll and proved humbling.

"It's sad," admitted a shaken Liefeld. "I believe I'll get through this. I don't know that I'd call myself a survivor but I've been fortunate in the career I've had.

"This is not a cocky move. It's not something I'm trying to trumpet, but I'm going to live with the decision." ■ *Matthew Senreich (with additional reporting by Joe Yanarella and Brian Cunningham)*

Image Conscious

Fellow and Former Image Creators Respond to Liefeld's Departure

TODD MCFARLANE: "I believe that in life you reap what you sow. It's now harvest time for Rob."

JIM LEE: "Will Image be weaker without Rob Liefeld? I doubt it. Will it be stronger? That's up to the remaining Image partners to decide and I think we're up for the challenge."

ERIK LARSEN: "[Rob] pulled a Richard Nixon. Nixon resigned as he was going to be kicked out, and Rob was going to be kicked out."

JIM VALENTINO: "It's been pretty difficult for me on a lot of levels personally because I feel very much like I've lost one of my dearest friends and that's really tough to take."

MARC SILVESTRI: "I think that people should realize that Image is there and will always be there. And whether or not I'm involved in that again, I think we'll have an announcement one way or another relatively soon." ■ *MS*

UNDYING LOVE. UNENDING PAIN.

SUPERMAN/WONDER WOMAN: WHOM GODS DESTROY

An Odyssey of Magic, Immortality and Humanity.

by CHRIS CLAREMONT
DUSTY ABELL and DREW GERACI

FOUR PRESTIGE FORMAT ISSUES
BEGINNING IN OCTOBER.

NEWS BITES

Foot Soldiers Enlist With Maximum Press

Jim Krueger's ***Foot Soldiers*** has joined the Maximum Press banner and will launch an ongoing series in November. The series will continue from the four-issue *Foot Soldiers* mini-series originally published by **Dark Horse Comics** earlier this year.

Foot Soldiers debuts at Maximum in a seven-page story featured in the October issue of ***Asylum***. The short story will lead directly into *Foot Soldiers* #1 which tells the origin in a five-page sequence drawn by **Kelley Jones**.

Krueger maintains complete creative control and hopes to feature a wide range of creative talent on the book. Some creators slated to be involved in the project are **Keith Giffen**, **Jeff Smith**, **Alan Davis** and **Matt Wagner**.

"Jim's eclectic and savvy group of heroes and the world in which they live is masterfully told in the *Foot Soldiers* comic and I'm proud to have it in the line," said Maximum Press Publisher **Rob Liefeld**. ■ *Matthew Senreich*

Batmobile Finds New Parking Spot

Kevin Eastman has found a parking spot for the Batmobile.

Eastman (co-creator of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) and his wife Julie Strain (actress/model) have recently acquired the Batmobile from the 1989 Warner Bros. "Batman" movie and have donated it to the Words & Pictures Museum of Fine Sequential Art (comic books and fantasy) in Northampton, Mass. It was exhibited from August 8th until Labor Day. "From day one, it was our desire to purchase and donate the exclusive use of this extraordinary example of comic/movie history to the Museum," said Eastman.

The Words & Pictures Museum is currently planning to build a permanent home for the Batmobile which will be showcased at the museum annually from Memorial Day to Labor Day. "A recreation of the Batcave would be fitting," said Eastman. ■ *MS*

Homage Comics Joins Image

Jim Lee's Homage Comics—an independent creator-owned line—will officially be incorporated under the Image banner in November. Homage products shipping that month and beyond will now only be available through Image and will appear in the Image part of the Diamond catalog.

The shift stems from the recent **Diamond Comics Distributors** acquisition of **Capital City Distributors**. "After the merger, it only made sense to come aboard with Image because Image has, in its [exclusive] relationship with Diamond, a better deal for a publisher than remaining independent," said Image Comics Executive Director **Larry Marder**.

Staying totally autonomous in Lee's domain, Homage Comics will remain a separate and distinct imprint within Image.

Astro City, ***Strangers in Paradise*** and ***Leave it to Chance*** headline Homage Comics' diverse line of alternative comic books and are still on schedule to be released over the course of the next few months. ■ *MS*

Broadway Becomes Golden

Golden Books Family Entertainment Inc. recently purchased the family library assets of **Broadway Comics'** parent company, Broadway Video Entertainment, L.P. The acquisition forms the basis for the new Golden Books Entertainment Group.

Golden, longtime publisher of children's entertainment (including the classic The *Poky Little Puppy*), now owns the rights to such well known properties as *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *Frosty the Snowman*, *Lassie*, ***The Lone Ranger*** and ***Underdog***. In addition, Golden now has ownership of Broadway Comics.

Interestingly enough, Golden (formerly Western Publishing), retains ownership of such classic comic properties as ***Solar*** and ***Turok***, titles that were revamped by Broadway's own **Jim Shooter** during the launch of **Valiant Comics**, current publisher of each character.

It is still unknown how the purchase will affect Broadway Comics as a comics publishing entity. ■ *Scott Beatty*

byte this

WHAT'S UP ON WIZARD WORLD

This month, log on for spooky fun and over $1,000 in awesome prizes!

In October, "Wizard World" gives away original Vampirella art by Amanda Conner, original Shadowman art by Ashley Wood and a box of 1,000 Lady Death chromium glow-in-the-dark trading cards. Plus, we'll give away signed comics from Harris, Chaos!, Acclaim, Caliber and others.

You can download pictures from top horror comics including *Vampirella*, *Lady Death* and *Shadowman*. We also have exclusive pictures of Joe Jusko's pencils for the upcoming Vampirella painted mini-series. Plus, check out Caliber's horror comics including *Golgothica*, *Autumn* and *Six Steel Hearts*.

Join our weekly e-mail list and keep up with *Wizard* online events and comic news. Send an e-mail called "Include Me!" to WizEmail@aol.com.

Call 800-754-4400 to hook up to "Wizard World" on America Online. You'll get free software and 15 hours of free online time. Keyword: Wizard.

CHAT SCHEDULES FOR THE SPECIAL EVENTS ROOM

MONDAY

- **MANGA/ANIME**
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  October 7, 14, 21, 28 & November 4, 11, 18 25
- **WILDSTORM** Featuring: **Jeff Mariotte**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  October 7, 21 & November 4, 18
- **TOP COW** Featuring: **Dave Wohl**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  October 14, 28 & November 11, 25

TUESDAY

- ***WIZARD* UNPLUGGED WITH REAL LIVE *WIZARD* EDITORS**
  Time: 6:30-7:30 p.m. (EST)
  October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & November 5, 12, 19, 26
- **X-MEN TRIVIA** Featuring: **X-Pert Benny Powell**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & November 5, 12, 19, 26

WEDNESDAY

- **ASTEROID X CLUB**
  Time: 6-7 p.m. (EST)
  October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & November 6, 13, 20, 27
- **TRIVIA CHAT** Featuring: *Wizard* Freelancer: Matt Brady
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  October 2, 16, 30 & November 13, 27
- **AVENGERS ASSEMBLE**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & November 6, 13, 20, 27

THURSDAY

- ***INQUEST* CHAT** Featuring: *InQuest*'s: **Rick Moscatello**
  Time: 10-11 p.m. (EST)
  October 3, 10, 17, 24 & November 7, 14, 21
- **MYSTERY GUEST** Featuring: **Ruth Morrison & Mystery Guest**
  Time: 8-9 p.m. (EST)
  October 17 & November 14

FRIDAY

- **LOOP (LEGION OF OVERPOWER, MARVEL CCG)**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  October 4, 11, 18, 25 & November 1, 8, 15, 22

SATURDAY

- **FANTASTIC FOUR CLUB**
  Time: 9-10 p.m. (EST)
  October 5, 12, 19, 26 & November 2, 9, 16, 23

SUNDAY

- **SANDMAN100 COMIC BOOK CHAT**
  Time: 8-10 p.m. (EST)
  Featuring: Don Lisk
  October 6, 13, 20, 27 & November 3, 10, 17, 24

■ *Buddy Scalera* (WizardTGTC@aol.com)

ENHANCE YOUR DECK.

PROTEUS

The *Proteus*™ expansion for Netrunner® has a few items on the agenda.

Check this. It kicks off with a new generation of versatile programs that change identity on the fly. Icebreakers that can pull a quick switch and become entirely different weapons at your discretion. Walls that can slap up code gate routines. Wallbreakers that can drop a sentry flat. The first limited-edition expansion set for **Netrunner** blows into stores this fall. Fifteen-card booster packs filled with the latest street-tech and industrial countermeasures. New innovations will put an edge on your game.

Are you getting this, Wilson? *Proteus* is out there. You better run.

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15-card booster packs (mixed Corp and Runner): $2.95 MSRP / Wizards of the Coast® Customer Service: (206) 624-0933

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Check out *Webrunner II, The Forbidden Code* online contest at http://www.wizards.com

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Comic Celebrities Share Halloween Memories

By Matthew Senreich

Yes, it's Halloween time again and we here at *Wizard* figured we'd get into the spirit of things. So we skulked around, did a bit of stalking and asked some creators about their most memorable Halloween moments...

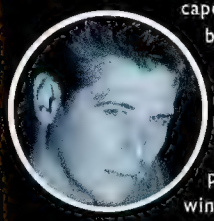
"My wife dressed up as Vampirella and gave me a surprise I'll never forget."

–Joe Madureira

"I decided everyone else is throwing away Tootsie Rolls, I thought I'd give away comic books. So come Halloween, a kid comes to the door and opens up one of those store-bought Halloween sacks. It's about half full and I take out a stack of comics and drop them in his bag...and blow out the bottom. There's an EXPLOSION of candy all over the place and the other kids all backed away with an "Oh gee, nevermind"-look on their faces. While the kid was not pleased, the mother was even less pleased. She went off on me like a drunken sailor on shore leave."

–Keith Giffen

"I was in seventh grade and had gotten that Dick Smith's professional make-up kit. I dressed up as Mr. Hyde, put a suit on, a cape, a cane and brought a big hatchet knife with me. It was real late at night and I was running up to people's back windows while they were watching TV and I'd bang on the windows while staring in. Someone must have called the police saying there was a psychotic old man running around with a knife because I can remember running through the woods with police chasing me with flashlights. I'm jumping over fences for dear life. I ran into the house and my mother's looking at me like, 'What the hell are you doing?' as my nose is dripping off of my face. The highlight of it all was that it was in the local paper the next day saying, 'Be on the lookout for a demented old man.' Too bad there wasn't a sketch."



–Billy Tucci

"I was about eight years old and I went out as Doctor Doom. All it was, was a green hooded sweatshirt with a cape my mom made, a mask my dad painted silver and a big thick black belt. It was a pretty miserable costume, but when I had it on...I *was* Doctor Doom. I may have even been the first kid in the world that went out as Doc Doom. *Fantastic Four* #5 had come out just shortly before that and it changed my life. I was Doom."

–Chuck Dixon

"My friends and I went to a house and rang the doorbell. The door opened and this old lady was going to give us candy. All of sudden from behind her, this guy like eight-feet tall in a werewolf costume came bombing down the steps and chased me and four of my friends for about a block. Then he just disappeared. We were all just terrified. Trick or treat was over after that; I think we all went home and just changed our pants."

–Tom Sniegoski

"Halloween night, I spent the entire night underneath a car, hiding from the police. We were in high school and set off these firecrackers, timing it so they all went off at the same time. Within a minute, there were tons of police cars and all of us scrambled and hid. I had to hide under a car in a driveway for like four hours as police cars patrolled back and forth with their lights shining in every direction. We were hiding like prisoners of war. And that's how I spent the entire Halloween...underneath a car."

–Terry Moore

"It was Halloween afternoon. I was 11, I was a paper boy and, always looking to enlarge my route, I was soliciting potential new *Post-Gazette* subscribers in a neighborhood some distance from my home. I approached a house surrounded by high, overgrown hedges and an unkempt yard. It looked dark inside, but you never know, so I knocked. I was suddenly nearly overcome by an irrational urge to get the hell away from there in a hurry. Then the door opened. A pleasant-looking woman I'd guess in her forties invited me in. Then she just started asking me questions about myself, about school, about things I was interested in—nothing improper, and yet it was on some level disturbing more and more as she asked question after question.

Finally, feeling almost desperate, I interrupted her in mid-question, croaking out a pitch for the paper. She said she'd like to subscribe, but she couldn't, and looked sad. She got up and led me back through the house toward the front door. I wanted to just bolt, but I kept telling myself not to be stupid, that there was no reason to be uncool. I looked back and she was in the entrance to the hall, barely visible in the dim light trickling in through the living room windows. She said that she'd enjoyed our talk. I mumbled something incoherent and left.

The next day, I passed by there again, soliciting subscribers. I saw that there was a for sale sign, mostly hidden by overgrown weeds, in front of the woman's house. I asked a neighbor about the lady next door, and was told that she'd died a year before, and that her husband and son, a boy around my age, had moved to California.

Absolutely true."

–Jim Shooter

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IT'S READY–ARE YOU?

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company updates

AC COMICS
November's *Femforce #99* is available in a deluxe edition, bagged with the *Secret Files of Femforce* that details Femforce's "prehistory" from the Paragon Publications magazines in the 1970s.

ADHESIVE COMICS
Due out in November, *Too Much Coffee Man: The Guide for the Perplexed* collects all appearances of Too Much Coffee Man that were in convention mini-comics and some Dark Horse stories.

ARCHIE COMICS
Space Ghost comes to Archie in December, when *Cartoon Network Presents #1: Space Ghost!* offers two new stories in which SG actually becomes a ghost, and then teams up with Blue Boy! . . . Jughead meets a brand-new rival — and his greatest threat yet — named Truta Twyst in November's *Jughead #89*, beginning a three-part story arc. . . . Look for the character-filled *Cartoon Network Holiday Special #1* in November.

Beach High

BIG ENTERTAINMENT
December brings three long-awaited trade paperbacks: *Mickey Spillane's Mike Danger Collection* (collecting issues #1-#6) and two volumes of *Leonard Nimoy's Primortals: Chronicles*, re-presenting issues #1-#6 and #7-#12. Each of the TPBs offers a brand-new short story. . . . *Beach High*, BIG's new supernatural title featuring models and murder in Miami, launches in December. It will offer splash pages painted by Brad Gorby (*Mike Danger*) next to text pages written by Christopher Golden (*Vampirella*).

BONGO COMICS
Simpsons Comics #26 borrows equal parts of "Speed" and Jackie Chan action for Bart Simpson's latest showdown with the villainous Sideshow Bob. Bart's trapped aboard a school bus packed with explosives and ready to blow!

BROADWAY COMICS
The first six issues of *Fatale* will be collected in the *Fatale: Inherit the Wind* trade paperback, set for release in November. It sports a cover by series artist J.G. Jones, and will include the "prequel" chapters from *Powers That Be #1* and *Shadow State #1* and *#2*, as well as "The Making of Fatale." A special hardcover edition, limited to 250 numbered copies and retailing for $75, comes signed by the creators.

Daemonstorm #1

CALIBER PRESS
Caliber says its *Daemonstorm #1* cover, storming the shelves in November, is by Todd McFarlane.

CARTOON BOOKS
"Bone Cousins: Hanging Out," the fourth and final poster in Cartoon Book's 1996 series of Bone posters, is due in December. It depicts the trio in their new home — the forest!

CHAOS! COMICS
Lady Death: The Crucible #1 will be available in November in a limited black leather edition to celebrate Lady Death's latest mini-series. The $19.95 edition features a cover by Steven Hughes depicting Lady Death in Viking regalia. Limited to 10,000 copies, the genuine leather edition comes polybagged to keep the leather all purty during shipping.

COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND
Two pieces of trial news: The charges against Planet Comics were recently reduced to two felonies (for trafficking of erotica) and one misdemeanor (keeping for sale of obscene materials). There were originally 10 counts against the retailers. Also, DC Comics recently determined that the Jonah Hex defamation case involving Joe Lansdale, Tim Truman and Sam Glanzman is covered under the company's insurance policy, and is taking on the case itself.

CRUSADE ENTERTAINMENT
November's *Shi #12* concludes the "Way of the Warrior" storyline, as Shi takes on her arch-enemy Masahiro Arashi. This issue ties up all of the title's long-running subplots and changes several characters' lives. . . . The complete story of Tomoe, including her debut and full mini-series, is re-presented in November's *Tomoe Trade Paperback #1*, a 96-page color book going for $13.95. . . . Crusade's first poster, the full-color Shi Fan Appreciation #1, ships in November for only $4.95.

DARK HORSE COMICS
November's *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron — The Warrior Princess #1* (of 4) sees the royal court of Eiatto come to reclaim its princess from the ranks of Rogue Squadron, which is a surprise to everyone — especially the princess! . . . *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor Quarterly #2* hits stands this November with adaptations by Steve Rude, Mark Waid, Richard Corben and more. . . . *John Byrne's Next Men #27-#30*, the most recent issues to date, are collected this December for $16.95. . . . *Oh My Goddess!* returns this December with the eight-part mini-series *Oh My Goddess! — Robot Wars*. Keiichi's sister Megumi, and the mechanically inclined Skuld build some big bots and start dukin' it out! . . . The four-part *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* mini-series is collected this December in a 112-page trade paperback for $14.95. . . . To coincide with the February 14 theatrical re-release of the epic "Star Wars" flick, Dark Horse will be adapting the movie into a four-issue mini-series and trade paperback at the same time, which will take into account the new footage and scenes. The mini-series' four covers will be by Dave Dorman, and all four will fit together to make one nifty poster.

DC COMICS
In late November is *Batman: Blackgate*, with stunning art by Joe Staton and John Hodgkins, about an overcrowded Blackgate prison ready to blow like a powder keg. . . . In December is a Batman/Deadman hardcover by James Robinson and John Estes. Advance artwork on the project looks stunning. . . . In January is the long-awaited Batman/Captain America "Elseworlds" one-shot by John Byrne. The story is set during the 1940s. . . . Tentative for a March release is a Teen Titans "Elseworlds" graphic novel by manga artist Adam Warren (*Dirty Pair*). The story was originally conceived as a "Legends of the Dead Earth" Titans annual, but looked so good that DC pumped up the page count. Early buzz says superhero and manga, fans won't wanna miss it. . . . In early '97, look for an Impulse trade paperback, collecting early issues of the series.

EVENT COMICS
Event's new high-tech adventure title *Thrax* soars into stores in November. The eight-issue mini-series is by Dave Ross (*Avengers West Coast*) and Mike Baron (*Nexus*), and stars a superpowered, winged covert operative. . . . The 22 Brides and new heroine Painkiller Jane will team up with Top Cow's Witchblade in the fall of 1997, courtesy of writer Garth Ennis and artists Amanda Conner and Jimmy Palmiotti.

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS
Shipping in November are two new *Love and Rockets* trade paperbacks. *L&R* Vol. 13 "Chester Square" chronicles Maggie's turbulent life from the end of "Wigwam Bam" through "Bob Richardson" in one hardcover edition. *L&R* Vol. 14 "Luba Conquers the World" collects *L&R #41-#50*, which is available as a softcover, hardcover and signed hardcover.

FOUR COLOR IMAGES
Alex Ross' *Kingdom Come* pages and promotional art will be on display at the comic art gallery from September 6 through October 7. For more info, call the gallery at (212) 431-3912.

HALLOWEEN COMICS
Reissuing the four issue mini-series *Chiller* in December, James Hudnall launches the first color mini-series at Halloween Comics which will be incorporated into the *ESPers* storyline.

IMAGE COMICS
• EXTREME STUDIOS
Beetleborgs #1, based on Saban's Fox TV show, launches in November with a story from Tom and Mary Bierbaum and art by Todd Nauck and Norm

continued on page 32

THE GLOVES ARE ~~OFF~~ ON!!!

OCTOBER IS

WITCHBLADE™ MONTH

WITCHBLADE 10/

THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 28TH

CHRISTINA Z.
DAVID WOHL
MARC SILVESTRI
MICHAEL TURNER
BATT
D-TRON
JD SMITH

SPECIAL ALTERNATE
THE DARKNESS #0
COVER BY
MARC SILVESTRI & BATT

WITCHBLADE
COLLECTED
EDITIONS SETS
(AND ISSUE #4)

WITCHBLADE
THE
GAUNTLET
POSTER

TOP COW COMICS

MICHAEL TURNER
D-TRON
JD SMITH '96

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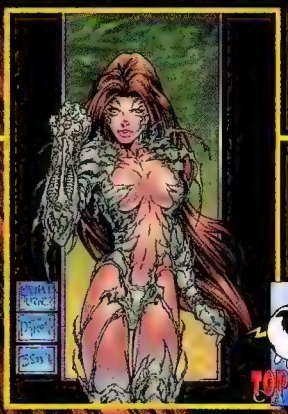
TALES OF THE WITCHBLADE 1

THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 14TH

CHRISTINA Z.
TONY DANIEL
KEVIN CONRAD



WITCHBLADE TRADING CARDS

(NOVEMBER)

THE CALENDAR'S BEEN MARKED... IN BLOOD.

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

BATMAN® THE LONG HALLOWEEN

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company updates

continued from page 30

Rapmund. Rick Veitch (*Swamp Thing, Bratpack*) serves as writer/artist for *Bloodhunter #1*, the first issue in a six-part horror mini-series in November.

• TODD MCFARLANE PRODUCTIONS

November sees the release of the next *Spawn* trade paperback collecting issues #12-#15. And hey, it's even got an all-new Todd McFarlane cover!

• WILDSTORM PRODUCTIONS

December marks the start of the ongoing *Wyonna Earp* series by Beau Smith and Joyce Chin. A descendant of the legendary Wyatt Earp, Ms. Earp is keeping the tradition alive, as she's a U.S. Marshall hunting all sorts o' weird paranormal activity.... If ya like *Gen^{13}*, and you're lookin' for somethin' new, then try December's *Gen^{13} Zine*, which is chock full o' inside information, fan art, fan questions about the series, interviews and more, all on regular xeroxed paper—just like a true fanzine!

KING HELL PRESS

October marks the re-release of the original seven issues of *Maximortal* in an all-new black-and-white trade paperback.

KITCHEN SINK PRESS

John Mueller's popular *Oink: Heaven's Butcher* mini-series is collected in a 112-page trade paperback this November, and includes unpublished sketchbook material as well as a sneak peek at 1997's *Oink: Blood and Circus* mini-series.... Mueller provides the cover to November's *The Crow: Wild Justice #2*.

MARVEL COMICS

Coming in November is *Superman/Silver Surfer* by George Pérez, Ron Lim and Terry Austin. Both of 'em have lost a planet and heaven help anyone that threatens another planet when these two titans team up!... Peter Parker with amnesia? Ben Reilly's a clone of yet another clone? These are just some of the most outrageous ideas that couldn't, shouldn't and wouldn't have ended the clone saga in *101 Ways to End the Clone Saga*, coming in November. Also in November is an updated *Marvel Try-Out Book*. Printed oversize at 11" x 17", this book allows fans to try their hand at finishing writing, penciling, inking, lettering and coloring an all-new X-Men tale by Andy Kubert and Art Thibert. After you're done, you can submit it to Marvel for a job!... Team X (Wolverine, Sabretooth and Maverick) and WildStorm's Team 7 cross over in a 48-page one-shot by Larry Hama and Steve Epting in November.... Deadpool kicks off his own series in November with a 56-page issue from Joe Kelly and Ed McGuinness.... Iceman gets some heat when his father takes a stand for mutant rights in *Uncanny X-Men #340*... David J. Schreff, who's previously held executive positions for the NBA, the Walt Disney Company and Viacom International, has been named President and Chief Operating Officer of Marvel Entertainment Group. Congrats!

MAXIMUM PRESS

Avengelyne and Warrior Nun Areala find a common bond in their assault on the legions of the Dragon on Earth in the *Avengelyne/Warrior Nun Areala* crossover by Rob Liefeld, Robert Napton, Andy Park and Sean Parsons, coming in December.... Take a walk on the dark side in November, as the Knightmare narrates a tale illustrating vignettes of key Maximum Press characters in *Dark Side #1* from Rob Liefeld, Robert Napton, Andy Park, Mark Pajarillo and Randy Queen. The best-selling sci-fi role playing game becomes a comic in November with *Traveler #1* (of 3) by Liefeld, Matt Hawkins and Chang Lou.

SPIDERBABY GRAPHIX

In addition to his *Tyrant* title, Steve Bissette is launching an ongoing anthology book titled *SpiderBaby Comix* in November with different writers and artists including Bissette, Alan Moore, Michael Zulli, Rick Veitch and others.

TOP COW PRODUCTIONS

One out of every four copies of Marc Silvestri's *The Darkness #1* will ship with a special variant "The Dark" cover in November. *The Darkness*, with writer Garth Ennis, marks Silvestri's first regular Top Cow work on a series in over a year.... Creator teams for the Marvel/Top Cow crossovers which begin to roll out in December are as follows—*Weapon Zero/Silver Surfer*: writer Walt Simonson, art by Silvestri; *Ghost Rider/Cyblade*: writer Ivan Velez Jr., art by Anthony Chun; *Ghost Rider/Ballistic*: writer Warren Ellis, art by Billy Tan; *Ballistic/Wolverine*: writer Larry Hama, art by Joe Benitez; *Witchblade/Wolverine*: writer David Wohl, art by Mike Turner; *Elektra/Witchblade*: writer Christina Z., art by Mike Turner; *Cyblade/Elektra*: writer Howard Mackie, art by David Finch; *Silver Surfer/Weapon Zero*: writer Brian Holguin, art by Joe Benitez.

W

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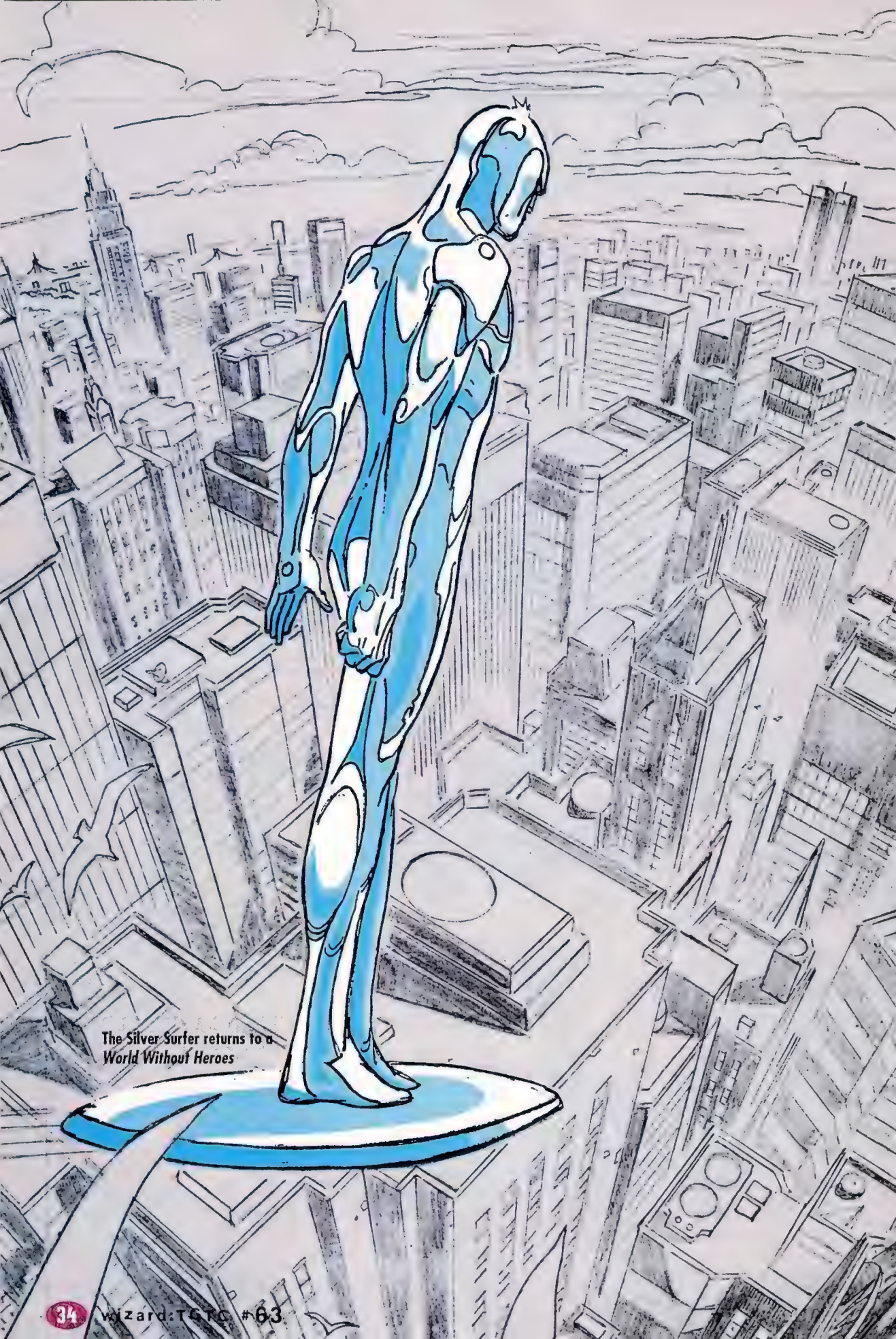

The Silver Surfer returns to a *World Without Heroes*

DAMAGE CONTROL

Ravaged by 'Onslaught,' the Marvel Universe must pick up the pieces in 'World Without Heroes' By Matthew Brady

Okay—the heavy hitters of the Marvel Universe are dead. So where does Marvel go from here?

To "World Without Heroes," that's where. Though not an official storyline title, this storyline *theme* follows the devastating "Onslaught" crossover that transplanted the Fantastic Four and the big guns of the Avengers to the "Heroes Reborn" reality. And suddenly, the man on the street of the Marvel Universe realizes that the world is a much scarier place.

"As far as the world is concerned, these heroes made the ultimate sacrifice to stop Onslaught," says Marvel Editor-in-Chief Bob Harras. "Some people may hold on to a thread of hope, but by and large, the world considers them as good as dead, and they are in a world without any heroes."

Harras is quick to point out that while readers may consider Spider-Man, the X-Men and Daredevil (who all survived Onslaught's fury) to be heroes, the average citizen of the Marvel Universe does not. "They don't particularly care very much for the X-Men, they don't trust Spider-Man, and outside of New York, people don't know who Daredevil is," Harras notes. "So now, the streets of the Marvel Universe have become a much more dangerous place in their eyes. Their heroes are gone. While there won't be any *World Without Heroes: Alpha* or *Omega* special issues or title changes, it will be the overall theme that's going to be running through our books for the next few months."

The concept for a "World Without Heroes" flowed very naturally from Marvel's recent "Onslaught" and "Heroes Reborn" events, Harras recalls. "I can't remember the exact moment of genesis, but it just seemed to make sense," he says. "If you remove the FF, Cap, Iron Man and the Avengers from one reality and put them someplace else, you have to have repercussions. The X-Men and Spider-Man can't go on and say, 'Oh well, life's the same as it always was.' People have to react. You have to have fear, you have to have concern, you have to have guilt. This opens up a lot of story possibilities."

Some of the stories will be obvious follow-ups to the disappearance of the heroes, such as the race by S.H.I.E.L.D. and other organizations to gain control of Four Freedoms Plaza, headquarters of the Fantastic Four, and presumably, the storehouse of Reed Richards' immense knowledge and technology. Other stories will feature more subtle changes, like the Black Widow returning to the pages of *Daredevil* to deal with her survivor's guilt or just the background candlelight vigils held at Avengers Mansion and Four Freedoms Plaza.

THOSE LEFT BEHIND

Something that will influence a lot of upcoming stories is the fact that while the major heroes of the Marvel Universe (in terms of power) are no longer around, the powerful villains that these heroes used to keep in check haven't gone anywhere. For example, what if Thanos, Ultron or another galactic threat decides to go stomping around in New York? "The governments of the world are going to be very concerned," Harras says. "While they used to depend on Reed Richards to help them fight off a cosmic threat, he's not around anymore."

Of all the heroes left following the battle with Onslaught, none will realize this new state of affairs more than Daredevil and Spider-Man. "We're really going to explore how Daredevil has to pick up the slack now that the big heroes are gone," says *Daredevil* writer Karl Kesel. "For example, Absorbing Man [who normally goes toe-to-toe with Thor] comes into town with the attitude that no one can stop him. It's not going to be an easy fight for DD; he's hopelessly out of his league here. Unlike his classic fights with the Hulk or Sub-Mariner, its not okay or acceptable if this guy just wanders away. This is a fight Daredevil has to win."

Meanwhile, over in the Spider-books, group editor Ralph Macchio reveals that Spidey isn't going to have an easy go of it, either. "The organized crime element in New York is going to be emboldened to make bigger moves due to the power vacuum left by the removal of the heroes," Macchio says. "Spider-Man is one of the few guys left in New York who can do something about it, and his workload is really going to be increased."

"That's always the great story, though," Harras reflects. "The hero should always be outclassed by the villain, because that's the whole challenge. These 'weaker' heroes will be at a disadvantage, but I think that's what makes it interesting. Since the rules have changed for

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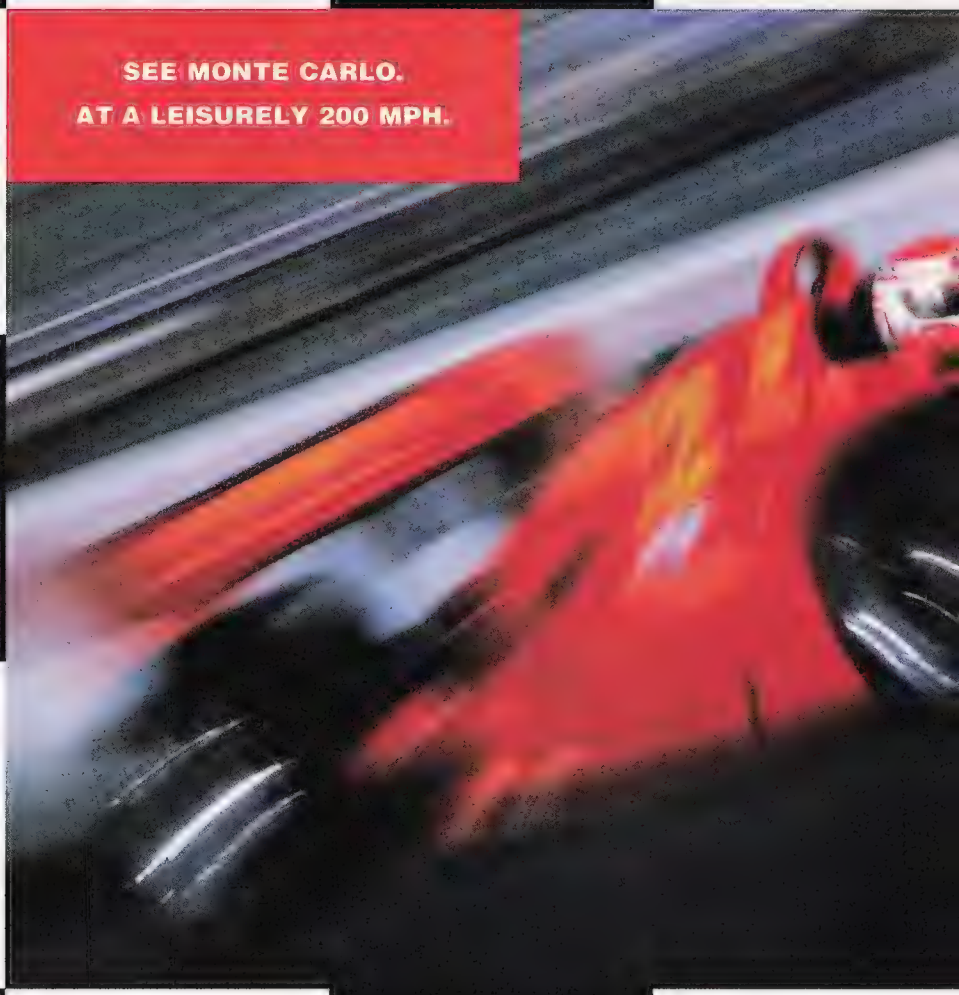

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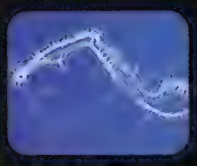

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"THE X-MEN are going to be particularly blamed for this. The initial surge of resentment is going to be very hard for them to overcome." —Bob Harras

everybody, all these doors open up story-wise that were closed before."

Of all the characters left after Onslaught, the Hulk will see the most change. "You want one word to describe the Hulk's new position in the Marvel Universe without the rest of the heroes?" *Incredible Hulk* writer Peter David asks. "Scapegoat. Here's how the rest of the Marvel Universe views it: The Hulk went into the battle with the FF, the Avengers, Thor and the rest; all the powerful beings who had previously kept him under control. When the smoke clears, and the dust settles, the Hulk is left standing, and all the people who have kept him in check are gone. As far as the general public is concerned, this makes him suspect number one."

This view held by the public, David reveals, is going to push the Hulk to take certain, definite steps to make sure that he is left alone while the world adjusts to the new status quo.

And what about the folks who were at ground zero of this crisis, the X-Men? "The X-Men are going to be particularly blamed for this," Harras states. "The initial surge of resentment against the X-Men and mutants in general following the events of Onslaught is going to be very hard for them to overcome."

"Certainly the heat is turned up on these characters, and they'll be responding in turn," agrees *X-Men* and *Uncanny X-Men* writer Scott Lobdell. "Operation Zero Tolerance, a multinational task force organized to keep track of mutants, will be stepping up its activities. However, as is often the case following a major tragedy, while there's trepidation over things to come, there is also a sense of relief, and a myriad of conflicting emotions that come to the survivors of the trauma. So, even though it was a really bad experience, night does follow day, and we'll be looking at a lot of hope and promise reinfusing itself into the books in the year to come."

Another possibility that may occur in the heroless world follows the old axiom that nature abhors a vacuum, and tries to replace what is missing. With the major heroes of the Marvel Universe gone, will new or veteran heroes rise up and restart old groups or form new groups to replace the missing heroes? "Some of the Avengers will be left behind, and they may look at things and say either, 'This is too devastating,' and just walk away, or start looking for new recruits to form another team," Harras states. "I don't think anyone will say, 'We have to be the replacement Avengers or the new Fantastic Four,' *per se*, but I do think they'll try to replace that feeling of brotherhood and camaraderie they shared with the fallen heroes. Will new characters come in? Hopefully. That's just the nature of the beast." (See sidebar for a preview of one new team.)

Blue-collar heroes like Spider-Man will have to pick up the crime-fighting slack

WILL THE HEROES RETURN?

While the Marvel Universe as we know it may turn into a darker, more dangerous place, is there hope on the horizon? Will the heroes ever return from the "Heroes Reborn" reality? "Despite the heroes' disappearance and reappearance somewhere else, there still is one Marvel Universe, and there will be repercussions back and forth between the titles," Harras says. "There is a plotline in *Incredible Hulk* where it will become necessary for Dr. Strange to travel [through] the dimensions and see if there is any hope that the missing heroes exist anywhere. What he finds is quite surprising, but I can't really say any more about it. It's just a way that we'll thread these [two] realities together."

Harras also says that Jim Lee, Rob Liefeld and the Marvel creators will be writing towards a specific plot point that can go either way at the end of the original 12-month contract. If the contract with Lee and Liefeld is renewed, the story can go one way. If the contract is not renewed, the story will take a different route, and ultimately return the missing heroes to the world they left behind.

Macchio adds that if and when the heroes do come back, things may actually be a little dicey for a while, since power relationships will have changed. "I'm not saying that every hero's niche will have been filled by another hero or a new hero, but there will be some shuffling when they come back," Macchio says. "It may be just like Reed Richards' recent return to the Fantastic Four after everyone thought he had died. Reed came back and jumped back into the leadership role, which Sue had filled after his death. For a while, Sue just bristled at every command Reed gave, which is a situation we may see upon the heroes' return, whenever that may be."

All in all, Harras sees the "World Without Heroes" theme as something that will ultimately spark excellent stories from the writers of the respective titles. "A world without heroes is something we've never done before, and from it, a lot of plotlines will spin out," Harras says. "We are really going to see some great stories come out of this. We're in uncharted waters here, and we're going to have a lot of fun."

Matthew Brady, who interviews Grant Morrison elsewhere in this issue, thinks he can pick up the slack left behind by Ant-Man.

FILLING THE GAP

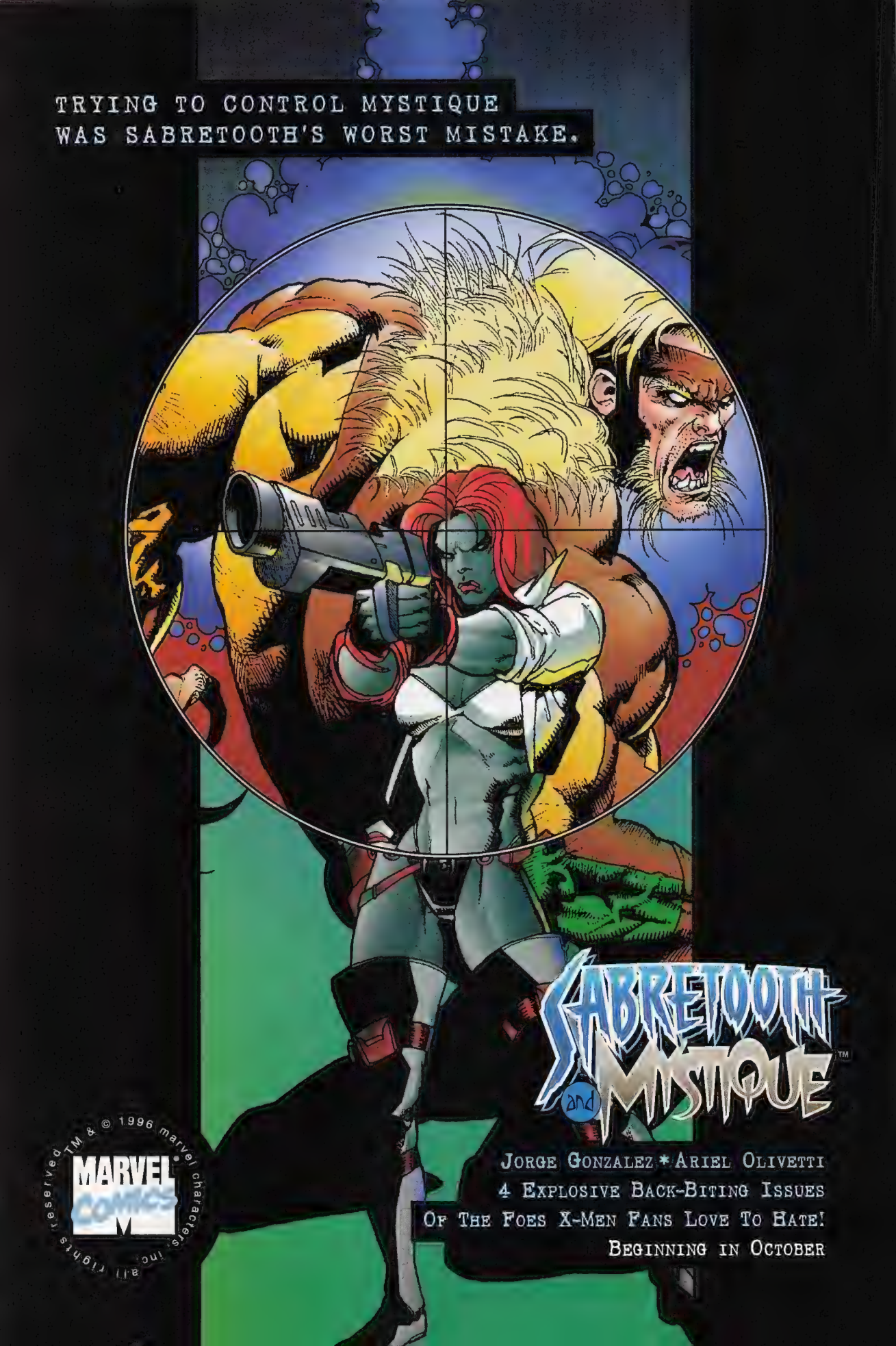
When the Marvel Universe loses the Fantastic Four, the Avengers, Iron Man and Captain America, it creates a major superhero gap. Citizens are not sleeping easy knowing they have to rely on the likes of the X-Men, Spider-Man, Daredevil and Ghost Rider to defend them against alien invasions and master criminals.

Rising to fill that gap is a team that Marvel is tentatively calling the Thunderbolts. The team consists of four men and two women who realize in these desperate times they must step from the shadows and use their enhanced abilities to defend the world. But the key question becomes: Are they ready to be the varsity team? Readers will find out as *The Thunderbolts* becomes an ongoing monthly series in February by writer Kurt Busiek (*Astro City*) and penciler Mark Bagley (*Amazing Spider-Man*).

The team is led by Citizen V, a charismatic master strategist. His second-in-command is Meteorite, who channels extraterrestrial energy that allows her to fly and focus energy blasts from her hands. The rest of the team is comprised of Songbird, who can harden sound waves into various shapes; Atlas, who can grow to giant size; Techno, a swashbuckling mechanical genius who cybernetically controls a backpack of electronic components; and M.A.C.H. 1, who creates a skintight fighter jet with an arsenal of weapons.

The team debuts in *Incredible Hulk* #449 in November, written by Peter David and drawn by Mike Deodato Jr. The Thunderbolts will also appear in the new *Marvel Universe Quarterly* #1 in December, in a story by Busiek and Bagley. Other appearances were being worked out at press time.

The team's psychological interactions will be paramount, Busiek says. "This series will follow the team's adventures, but it also will be about what it's like to be on the varsity. Each member joins for a different reason, and those differences will be exacerbated by their new responsibilities and the fame that goes with that. It will create a psychological crucible that they may not all survive." —Craig Shutt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MARVEL COMICS

Wedding of the Century

AFTER 60 YEARS, SUPERMAN AND LOIS LANE FINALLY TIE THE KNOT

BY MATTHEW BRADY

Metropolis' most eligible bachelor is finally getting married. After nearly 60 years of courtship, a six-year engagement and one break-up, Clark Kent and Lois Lane are finally tying the knot in *Superman: The Wedding Album*, shipping October 9th. The 96-page jam book will showcase the talents of Superman creators past and present, including John Byrne, Jerry Ordway, George Pérez, Jackson Guice, Art Thibert, Nick Cardy and others. Additionally, the issue will feature a previously unpublished four page story penciled by the late Curt Swan, legendary Superman artist.

The road to marriage is never an easy one, even when you're talking about a comic book character. Luckily for the Lois and Clark of comic book fame, the "Lois and Clark" of television fame were planning the same thing (see sidebar), and managed to help speed them to the altar.

"We were planning on getting them married for a while now," says Mike McAvennie, associate editor on all five Superman titles. "When we heard that 'Lois & Clark' was going to be doing the wedding this season, we figured that this would be the perfect way to tie the book and the show together. This way, it worked out best for everybody."

Superman: The Man of Tomorrow writer Roger Stern is very blunt when asked about the timing of the wedding. "Well, it's about time," Stern says. "It's certainly the right time in their relationship, and also in Superman's career. As we've told the story, he's been Superman for about 10 years now. He and Lois have been a couple for the past two or three years, and have been engaged for the past year or so. The thing that I'm very pleased with is that unlike some other comic book weddings, we were able to develop their relationship over the years so that they grew together as a couple."

Karl Kesel, writer of *The Adventures of Superman* agrees. "Lois and Clark are a very strong couple," he says. "Outside of Reed and Sue Richards in the Fantastic Four, they're probably the only couple in comics that I'm glad to see get married. Lois and Clark really belong together."

One of the more surprising aspects of the wedding is the fact that the event has been planned out for years. Originally, Clark and Lois were supposed to get married within two years after their 1990 engagement in *Superman* #50. However, plans for the "Lois & Clark" TV series were announced around that time, and the comic book wedding was put on hold, hopefully to coincide with the wedding in the TV series sometime in the future. An interesting sidenote to all the wedding plans is that *Superman* #75 was originally suggested to be the wedding issue. Instead of a wedding however, that issue went down in history as the book where Superman died at the hands of Doomsday.

As the timing of the wedding was more or less dictated by the television show's schedule, some rescheduling of current Superman plots was required. For example, Lois told Clark she needed time to herself, and left Metropolis to be the *Daily Planet*'s foreign correspondent in *Superman* #115. Now, only three short months later, Lois is back in town, the two have reconciled their differences and the couple are headed down the aisle. "There was some reshuffling," McAvennie says. "For a little while here and there, things would get a little tough in regards to fixing things up, but for the most part, everyone worked to put something together that we can all be very proud of."

The Super-writers agreed with McAvennie, reporting that small, if any changes needed to be made to their monthly books to accommodate the wedding, such as a few pages redone here, and some minor dialogue changes in other spots. "Although word of the wedding came down fast, we were able to go with it and fit just about every little detail that we wanted into the wedding album," Stern says.

"It was a slight rush for us, simply because we had to accommodate the television show's schedule, which isn't necessarily the schedule we would've preferred to work on," *Superman: The Man of Steel* writer Louise Simonson says. "We

TV WEDDING: NO JOKE

"Swear to God. This Time We're Not Kidding."

It's more than an admission from the producers of "Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman." It is the name of the episode of the ABC series that will finally feature the wedding of Clark Kent and Lois Lane.

No frog-eating clones in white wedding garb this time. Unlike last February's wedding of Clark to a flawed duplicate of Lois created by the villainous Lex Luthor, sources at ABC confirm this will be the real wedding between the real Lois and the real Clark. Well, as *real* as fictional television gets.

The hour-long episode will be the third of the upcoming fourth season and follows "Lord of the Flies" and "Battlefield Earth," two episodes which resolve the New Krypton cliffhanger from last season. No air-date was set at press time, but the wedding episode will likely air in the middle of October.

Of course, the wedding won't go smoothly. Delta Burke ("Designing Women") plays Myrtle Beech, a prison escapee and the episode's villain. Myrtle is known as "the wedding destroyer" and sets her devious sights on the nuptials of Lois and Clark, who helped put her in jail originally.

John McNamara, one of the producers of "Lois & Clark," wrote the episode, which was filmed in late August. Michael Lange directed.

It seems odd that ABC wouldn't wait to air this significant episode during the November sweeps period, when networks try to attract their best ratings for advertising purposes. But a source told *Wizard* the producers felt they had put the wedding off long enough and they wanted to put in the new wrinkles of Lois and Clark being married early in the season.

Series creator Deborah Joy Levine has said repeatedly that it was her intention from the outset that Lois and Clark would be married before the end of the show's run. "Lois & Clark" picked up critical and ratings momentum early in the previous season when Clark revealed to Lois that he was Superman.

There was no word at press time on episodes beyond "Swear to God. This Time We're Not Kidding," or if viewers would be able to follow the newlyweds on their honeymoon.

"Lois & Clark" is a production of the television branch of Time Warner, which also owns DC Comics. The series is in its fourth season on ABC, having remained in the hotly contested Sunday, 8 p.m. (ET) time period. The show had its best ratings ever last season, and stars Dean Cain and Teri Hatcher have both become well-known celebrities and sex symbols. Hatcher was named "Sexiest Woman on TV" in an August *TV Guide* poll. ■ *Rob Allstetter*

didn't have time to work up to the wedding in the course of the previous year, so we had to fit all those scenes that we would've fit around other continuity. We rushed a little in preparing it, but it won't appear that Lois and Clark rushed."

For the most part, Lois' departure and somewhat sudden return fit seamlessly into the books. "To me, just because Lois Lane left Metropolis didn't make the wedding any harder to work out at all," *Superman* writer Dan Jurgens says. "Something had to happen in their relationship to convince them that getting married is, hands down, absolutely what they want to do. While she was away, Lois realized that she was much happier with Clark than she was alone. For me, I saw her leaving as creating this opportunity for them to see how much they needed each other."

Keeping with the comic book tradition started by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, the entire Superman creative team will be drawn in the wedding scene as guests. "I've seen the page, and we're all there, I was able to name us all," Kesel says of the art drawn by Dan Jurgens. "It is kind of mind-boggling to think that 20 years from now, people will still look back at this wedding album as a turning point that changed the status quo of Superman, and your face will be in the background. It's like waking up one morning, and seeing your face on Mount Rushmore. I don't think I can put into words how I feel. This is probably the most important thing that has happened to Superman since his creation…or at least since his death.

"I think people will remember the death as something that drummed up an awful lot of interest, but he got better from being dead. Let's face it, he's not going to get 'better' from his wedding. This marriage is going to last for the rest of his creative run, which will probably [be] centuries."

Kesel's feelings of intimidation and excitement were echoed by the other writers of the Superman books. "I'm really delighted to be one of the people who has been allowed to have participated in it," Simonson says. "I'm glad I was just in the right place at the right time."

"It's sort of an honor to be involved in something that is a great moment in comics history," Jurgens says. "I've drawn the wedding scene between the two characters, and when you sit down and draw something like that, you can't help but realize that you're doing something that is going to be a famous scene in the history of comics. From that standpoint, it's an honor. There's no doubt about it."

"Career-wise, this is going to be really hard to top," McAvennie adds.

Along with the bachelor party (thrown at Bibbo's Ace of Clubs bar by Jimmy Olsen in the *Wedding Album* issue), it always seems that just before a wedding, one of the groom's friends will have a heart-to-heart discussion with him to make sure he has thought everything through, and that the groom is sure he's making the right decision. When the groom in question is secretly the Man of Steel, who else would play this role except Batman? "Batman is going to show up and share his opinions with Clark about the idea of marriage," McAvennie says. "He's basically wants to make sure Clark has thought things through, and that he's ready to bring someone into his rather unique life."

Rest assured, Clark does think things through, and realizes that he was meant to share his life with Lois.

Longtime Superman writer Stern was tapped to write the wedding itself, from the rehearsal dinner to the ceremony.

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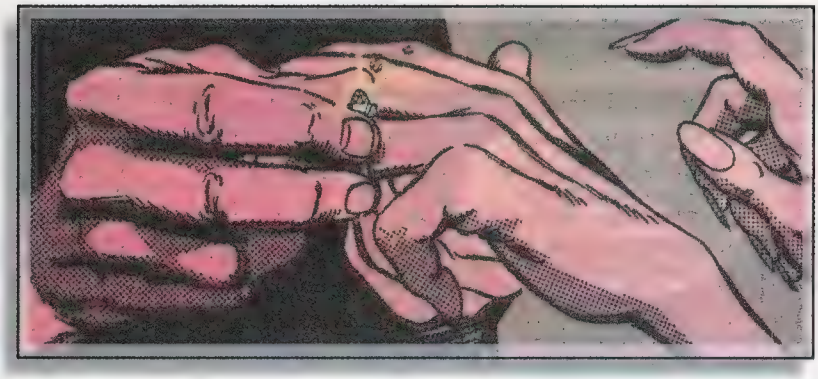

"This is the fourth wedding I've 'presided' at," Stern says, "so I think I have the ceremony just about down pat by now." Stern has previously written the marriage ceremonies of Johnny Storm and Alicia Masters in *Fantastic Four*, and the Pete Ross/Lana Lang and Lex Luthor/Contessa marriages in the Superman books.

The wedding will take place in a small chapel in Metropolis. The ceremony will be officiated by an Army chaplain who has known the Lane family for a long time, and was present at Lois' christening. Jimmy Olsen will serve as Clark's best man, and Pete Ross, Bill Henderson and Ron Troupe will be ushers. Lois' sister Lucy will be her maid of honor, and Lana Lang, Fran Johnson and Lori Lemaris will be Lois' bridesmaids.

While the chapel will be filled with Metropolis' celebrities such as Mayor Berkowitz, Colin Thornton and Perry White, Stern admits that there will be very few, if any, representatives from the superhero community in attendance. "Most of the other heroes don't know that Clark is Superman," Stern says. "Alpha Centurion noses around the proceedings a little since he and Lois were almost an item for a while, but all in all, this won't be a big superhero bash. Lex Luthor was most definitely not invited."

And what about after the wedding? While the couple will take a romantic Hawaiian honeymoon (and will conveniently bump into Hawaiian native Superboy) in *The Adventures of Superman* #541, *Action Comics* #728, and *Superman: The Man of Steel* #63, what about life after getting hitched? Will Lois fade into the background, baking cookies and gossiping while sipping tea with other superhero wives? Not likely. "Lois is part of the book," Kesel says. "And now, she's a major player in the book. We can't just have her in the background making pancakes for Clark. I'm looking forward to writing the Lois and Clark team. They sort of have this 'Nick and Nora Charles' feel [from 'The Thin Man' series of films] to them that will be fun to play with."

McAvennie confirmed that Lois is in no danger of becoming a housewife. "Lois has always gotten herself into scrapes, even when Superman wasn't around," he says. "As an investigative reporter, danger is not something she's unfamiliar with. She's definitely going to keep being the same tough reporter that Clark fell in love with. Clark knows that Lois is a very strong and independent person, and can adapt to this change in her lifestyle."

"Lois still may have a few concerns about her own autonomy and if marrying Clark is going to turn her into someone that she is not, and really doesn't want to be," Simonson cautions. "She's willing to take the chance though, and we'll try to answer some of her other questions as we go."

As for the multitude of other changes between the two? "The changes are going to be subtle and not so subtle," Jurgens says. "A subtle change that will become a big change is that all of a sudden Clark Kent is wearing a wedding band. We've always had these classic scenes where Clark has ripped open his shirt to see the "S" symbol underneath. Now, we're going to need a little inset panel of him taking off his ring as well. Also, we all know that Clark is married, but as far as the world is concerned, Superman is still single. I'd like to play around with some tabloid-type speculation of a relationship between Superman and say, Wonder Woman. These changes are just going to add to the fun of the book."

Another more obvious change is that Superman will get a haircut in the *Wedding Album* after three years of the longer style. "There have been a number of us on the books who have wanted to have the hair cut for a long, long time," Jurgens says. "Superman with longish hair looked okay, but there were those of us that felt it was just getting unrealistic. Frankly, I think Clark looked like a dork with a ponytail."

Simonson pointed out another change in the Lois and Clark dynamic. "You have to remember that you don't just marry one person, you marry their entire family as well," Simonson says. "Lois' dad still isn't too thrilled with the idea of the wedding, and there are some differences that will have to be worked out."

"I'm looking forward to doing years of 'young married' stories," Stern says. "I'm not saying that the Superman books will turn into DC's version of 'Mad About You,' but that type of relationship wouldn't be too wrong."

"While it will be fun, there's no question that it is a substantial change in the characters, and you can only hope it is the right thing," Jurgens says. "For example, I thought it was a mistake for Spider-Man to get married. He's supposed to be this young, hip superhero, not encumbered with the responsibilities of being a family man. However, I think that Lois and Clark getting married is entirely appropriate, because it is an entirely logical step for the two characters to take."

McAvennie agreed. "Characters need to evolve and grow all the time, and that's one of the things that has kept Superman going all these years is his ability to grow," McAvennie says. "The fact that he and Lois are getting married is just another step in that growth and in his commitment to Lois."

But what about

the fact that getting married is a very "grown up" step in life? Isn't the Man of Tomorrow in danger of alienating some of his younger readers by suddenly becoming a husband…someone only a couple of steps away from being a father? "Superman has always acted as an adult authority figure," Kesel says. "If you ask me, I don't think kids just want to read stories about young characters. Kids want to read good stories. He's always been a fairly adult character. Undoubtedly, he is making a big commitment to Lois, but I think it's a good thing for him."

As for the naysayers who remind us that nearly 50 percent of all of today's marriages end in divorce, don't plan on seeing Lois and Clark embroiled in a bitter separation any time soon. While no editorial decree has come down from on high, the Superman writers were unanimous in their feeling that such a decree is unnecessary. Lois and Clark will not separate. Ever. "I couldn't see [a divorce] fitting with Clark's personality at all," Jurgens says. "The one thing Clark Kent never, ever does is admit defeat or give in to failure in anything, even his marriage. According to my understanding of the characters, a divorce is impossible."

And as for the question that every newly married couple gets shortly after the wedding, no, children are not on the immediate horizon. While an informal poll of the creators show them to vary on their feelings about the possibility of a Kryptonian and an earthling being able to have children in the first place, no one is in that much of a hurry to start a Super-family. "I have to admit though, I'd love to do one of those imaginary stories with super-toddlers flying around the room," Jurgens says.

For now, everyone is set to revel in the celebration of the wedding. Kesel sums up the feelings of the whole group. "Lois and Clark are on the short list that I hold in my heart of hearts of people who were actually meant to be a couple. This is just destiny working itself out in comics."

Matthew Brady, who got the skinny on the post-"Onslaught" Marvel Universe elsewhere in this issue, is already married. But he can't shake that tabloid speculation about him and Wonder Woman…

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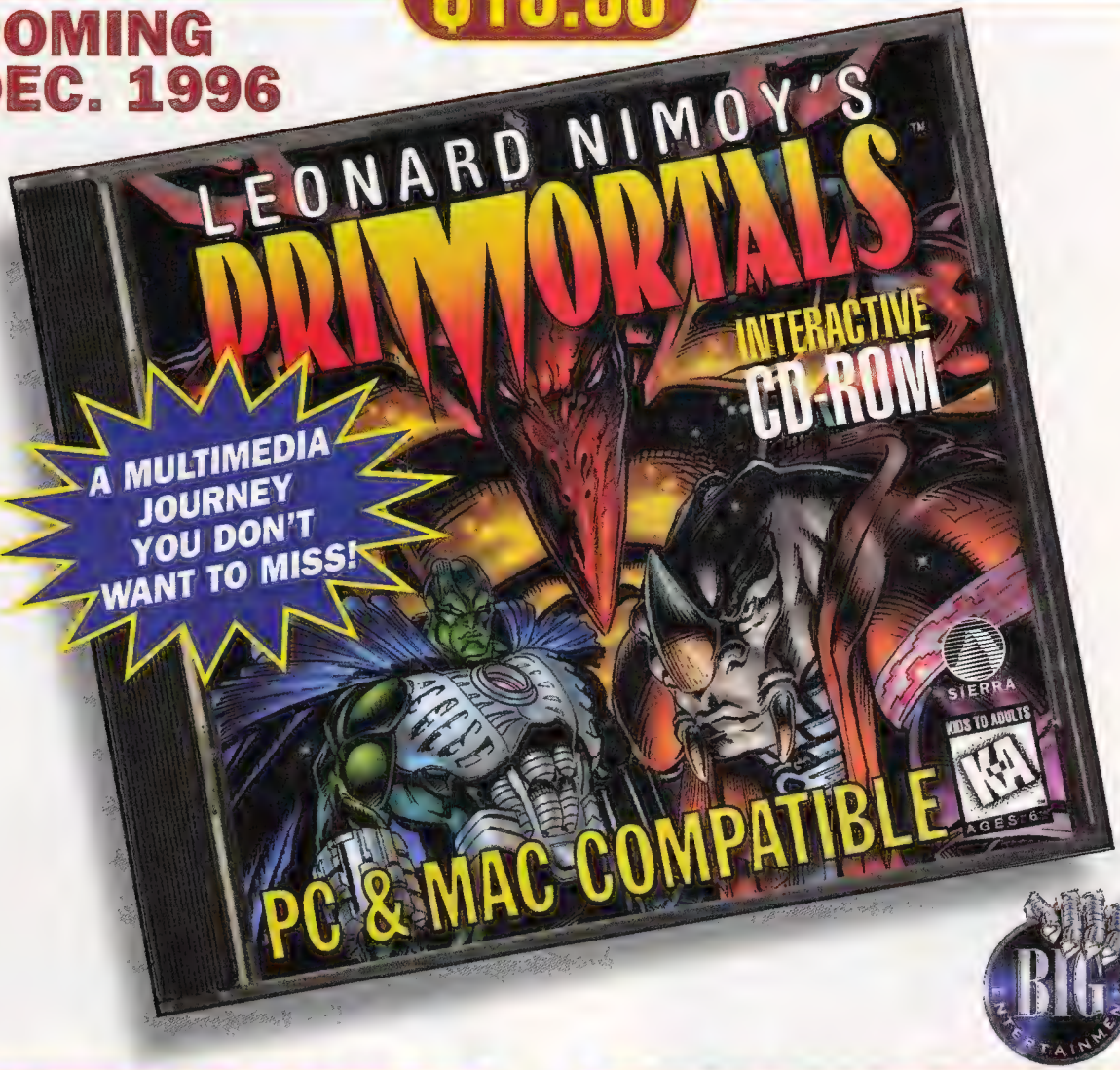

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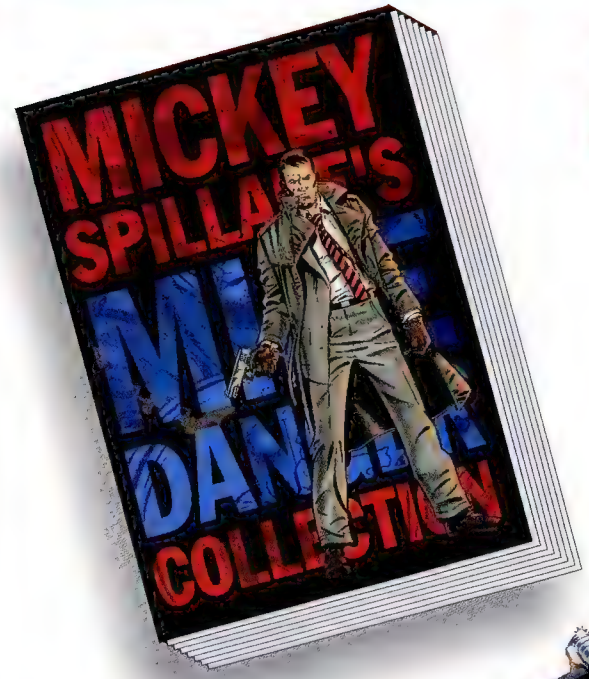

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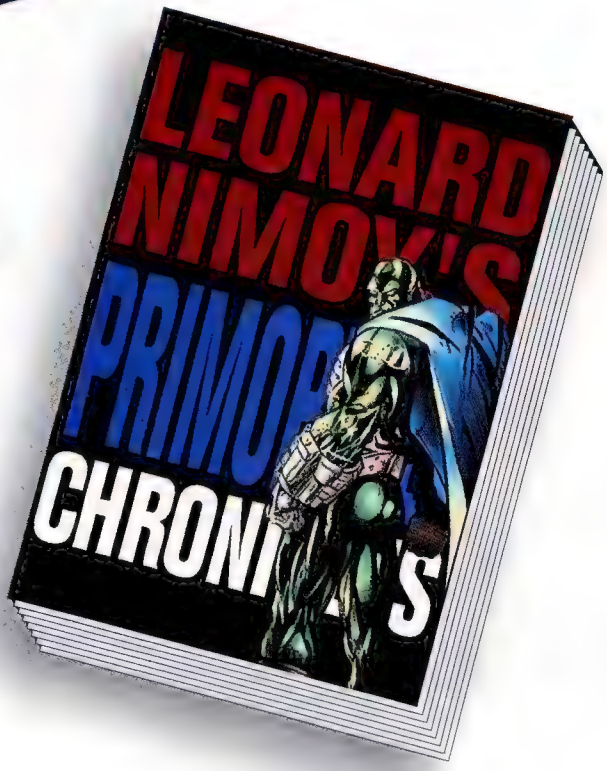

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Little Rascals

Combining mutants and adolescence with a dash of humor and quirkiness, Marvel's *Generation X* is in a niche all by itself

By Andy Lee

These aren't your dad's New Mutants. And that's probably why fans can't get enough of Marvel's youngest mutant team. *Generation X* follows the adventures of a group of mutants at Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters under the tutelage of headmasters Banshee (a former X-Man) and the White Queen (a former X-foe). Writer Scott Lobdell's humorous, offbeat tales combined with Chris Bachalo's cool, quirky art bring the team of Jubilee, M, Penance, Synch, Mondo, Skin, Chamber and Husk to life.

The team's genesis stems from 1994's "Phalanx Covenant" crossover, where Banshee, Sabretooth and the White Queen raced to find the next generation of mutants in order to save them from the mutant-hunting Phalanx. Well, those young mutants survived and went on to become members of Generation X.

The team's worst foe is most definitely Emplate, a mutant gene-sucking vampire who wants nothing more than to feast on the members of Generation X. But in their short career, the Gen Xers have also battled Gene Nation and Orphan Maker, taken a trip to Fairy Land, fought Omega Red, faced Emplate again and even battled their own teammate Synch, who was under Emplate's control. And that's all in just under two years.

Anyway, here's a closer look at the members of Generation X:

Pushing their way onto the scene: Jubilee, Skin, Synch and M

HUSK

Real Name: Paige Guthrie

Powers: Paige can shed her skin, revealing a new enhanced form underneath each time, such as an organic steel or stone body. Diligent and hard-working, Paige is internally driven to become the leader of Generation X and hopes to one day be an X-Man like her brother Sam (a.k.a. Cannonball).

Around the Corner: The bubbling romance between Husk and Chamber will have a big falling-out. This gap between the two will divide the entire team, a fissure writer Scott Lobdell points out as being "just like high school."

Famous Line: "Isn't that the whole reason we're at this school, to learn how to be the best mutants we can be?"

MONDO

Real Name: Unknown

Powers: Mondo is a laid-back Samoan with the ability to absorb any mass and its characteristics, becoming a water elemental when absorbing water or a stone creature when absorbing rocks.

Around the Corner: Mondo will discover that he's related to one of the Uncanny X-Men's first foes. Lobdell coyly describes the villain as "not a *blood* relation," hinting that it could be Krakoa, the monstrous living island from *Giant-Size X-Men* #1. Gen X will face off against this relative sometime next year.

Famous Line: "Whoa. So this is the rest of the world."

PENANCE

Real Name: Yvette (last name unknown)

Powers: Her entire body is atrophied to the point of diamond-hard, razor sharpness. Mute and skittish, Penance is a complete mystery to the team but is slowly learning to trust them.

Around the Corner: Penance will begin to relax her diamond-hard body as she gradually feels more comfortable with the team, revealing different sides of herself.

Famous Line: "..." *

* Penance has not spoken.

JUBILEE

Real Name: Jubilation Lee

Powers: A former X-Man, Jubilee can project fireworks from her fingertips, but appears to be holding back the full extent of her powers. Her tough, apathetic attitude stems from being an orphan and living on her own.

Around the Corner: When the team becomes separated from Banshee and the White Queen later this year, Jubilee's battle experience will save the team.

Famous Line: "Yo! I should let ya know I get *torked* when people *ignore* me!"

SKIN

Real Name: Angelo Espinoza

Powers: Having total control over his overabundant skin, Angelo is capable of using it as a rope or projectile, or to blanket an opponent. Irreverent, cunning and street-smart, Angelo must concentrate to keep his skin tight and "normal"-looking.

Around the Corner: Future issues will reveal more about Skin's background and his relationship with the person named Torre, who believes Angelo is dead. But according to Lobdell, "The more layers of mystery that are [explained] about Skin, the more mysterious he becomes."

Famous Line: "*¡Hola!* The name is Skin. Relax. All you're missing is a view of me kicking your butt!"

M

Real Name: Monet St. Croix

Powers: M has the powers of flight, strength and speed, and psionic abilities that may rival Emma Frost's. However, she is prone to mysterious catatonic trances. While viewed by her teammates as arrogant and stand-offish, Bachalo insists they'll have more sympathy for her following the revelation of her secret in issue #21.

Around the Corner: M will spend Christmas Eve with her father and brother (Emplate) in a sort of dysfunctional family affair this December. And the results of the Beast's diagnosis of her psychological and physical condition in #21 will profoundly affect her relationship with the team.

Famous Line: "As I've said in the past, there is precious little I don't know."

CHAMBER

Real Name: Jonothon Starsmore

Powers: When he first manifested his extremely powerful bio-blasts, Jonothon blew out his chest and the lower half of his face, and crippled his girlfriend, Gayle Edgerton. Sullen and withdrawn, he psionically speaks to his teammates with a cynical, caustic edge.

Around the Corner: After breaking things off with Paige, Jono realizes how profoundly his condition will affect the rest of his life. He will become angry and resentful as he realizes he has no hope for a normal existence.

Famous Line: "Mutants are one step removed from bein' monsters."

SYNCH

Real Name: Everett Thomas

Powers: Synch can "synch" his aura with any nearby mutant, duplicating that mutant's powers temporarily. He can also use his aura for limited mutant tracking.

Around the Corner: After the tortuous events of issues #15 and #16, where Synch wreaked havoc under Emplate's control, Lobdell's giving Synch a break. Everett'll continue to be everyone's friend, which is what he does best.

Famous Line: "Between learning I'm a mutant and slugging it out with something called the Phalanx, I doubt Missus Thomas' little boy Everett is going to be surprised by anything again."

BANSHEE

Real Name: Sean Cassidy

Powers: By manipulating his sonic scream, Banshee can fly and emit directed blasts. He is a former X-Man, Interpol agent, and for a short time, criminal. To the Gen Xers, he is the even-tempered cool parent.

Around the Corner: According to

Lobdell, "The more involved Banshee gets in the lives of his students, the more he realizes how much he missed raising his own daughter." This will lead to a "custody battle" over his daughter, Siryn of X-Force—not a legal battle, but a deadly fight with someone who wants Siryn for him or herself—and the lives of the Gen X kids hang in the balance.

Famous Line: "They seem like a fine brood of children...I might as well accept the truth now: They're going to bury me alive."

THE WHITE QUEEN

Real Name: Emma Frost

Powers: A telepath with powerful psionic abilities, Emma is the former White Queen of the Hellfire Club. While reformed, she occasionally takes a less scrupulous approach with her powers, achieving her goals by possessing people's minds.

Around the Corner: Sexual tension will continue between Emma and Sean, but their relationship will remain platonic, since it would otherwise affect the kids too much. Emma's sister, Cordelia, will show up again in the near future, causing more sisterly strife.

Famous Line: "It's the very least they deserve. They're homo-sapien bigots. They're lucky I don't mindwipe them completely!"

These mutant kids just wanna have fun

The kids get a hard dose of reality around issue #25, when they get their butts kicked in a major battle resulting in their separation from Emma and Banshee. "Their journey home is more of an odyssey, much like the X-Men's return from the Savage Land via Japan and Canada [in *Uncanny X-Men* #118-#121]," says Lobdell. Thanks to the deeds of Onslaught, though, the kids will face even more anti-mutant sentiment than ever before on their journey home.

Lobdell emphatically denies rumors that Iron Fist is coming aboard as the team's new mentor. He does, however, assure us that Generation X won't be fighting any typical X-Men villains over the next year, nor will they be crossing over with any other books for some time. They'll just continue to be the most offbeat X-team there is. And the fans wouldn't have it any other way. W

Andy Lee never met a mutant he didn't like. Except for that six-fingered science teacher he had in the third grade.

Talkin' 'Bout His Generation

"I don't think it ever takes itself too seriously," says artist Chris Bachalo in regards to the monthly *Generation X*. After quietly coming on the comics scene with *Sandman* #12, the artist followed up with a sizable run on *Shade: The Changing Man*, work on *Death: The High Cost of Living* and various Marvel assignments before co-creating *Generation X* with Scott Lobdell.

When forced to choose his favorite Gen Xer, Bachalo squirms for a bit before admitting that it's Skin. "Skin is just the best," he reveals. "There's something very stringy, messy, cool, gritty and tough about him. He has so much unrealized potential."

Bachalo admits to trouble with two of the characters he *didn't* create, though. "I'm still trying to discover what Jubilee is all about," he says. "I wanted to get her away from that 'Robin' kind of look. I'm also having a really hard time capturing a look to the White Queen. If someone were to go back and look from issue #1, she's the character that's probably changed the most. I'm still getting to know her."

Most of the inspiration for these weird, quirky characters comes from the artist himself. "It's inevitable that each character has a little bit of me in them. Skin is my gritty side. M is my feminine side. Husk is my clean-spirited, diligent side. Even Emplate is a bit of that weird, diabolical, eccentric side."

"I want the book to be fun," says GENERATION X penciler Chris Bachalo

Bachalo, who recently took a break from the book to pencil *Death: The Time of Your Life* for Vertigo, has a specific goal for the team. "I'd like to see them all grow as characters," he says. "Scott and I have yet to explore some of them—see what motivates them and dig more into their past. I want to explore the benefits and detriments of being blessed with these powers."

The bottom line for Bachalo, though, is to have a good time. "When it comes right down to it, I want the book to be fun. I want people to buy it and sit down with it for 20 or 30 minutes of escapism. I want it to be worth their money and have them come away from it with a good feeling." ■ *AL*

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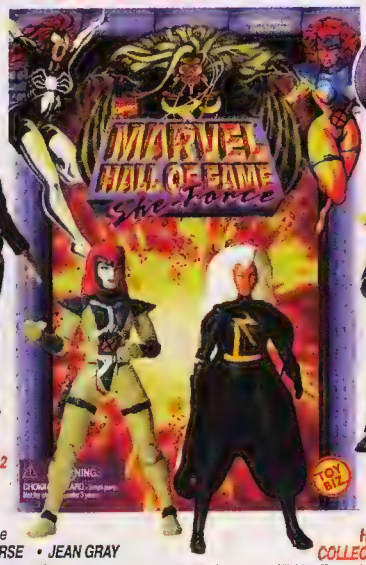

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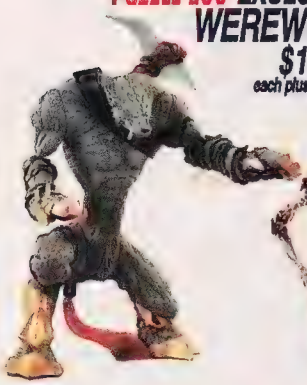

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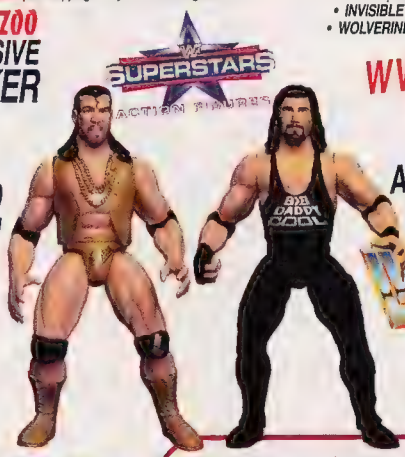

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WITCHFUL THINKING

BY MARC SHAPIRO

TOP COW'S *WITCHBLADE* MIXES THE OCCULT WITH 'NYPD BLUE'

She's got it all. Brains. Beauty. And a mystical gauntlet that makes her one of the deadliest women in comics. But take a closer look. *Witchblade* may have many of the trappings of the rest, but comic book fans have quickly learned that the allure of Top Cow's resident *femme fatale* cuts more than just skin-deep.

"*Witchblade* is more of a thinking book," offers Top Cow Editor-in-Chief David Wohl, co-creator of the red-hot character with Top Cow founder Marc Silvestri. This is one title that isn't turning out to be your normal babes with boobs and big guns exercise. *Witchblade* is the story of Sara Pezzini, a cop gunned down by the mob and the inheritor of a mystical Witchblade gauntlet worn by only one person in each generation. Sara's life has been anything but mundane, with the series' mix of mystery, conspiracy and full-throttle action. And the lack of normalcy is what originally had Wohl shaking in his boots.

"We had never done a book where the art and the narrative complemented each other as much as *Witchblade* did. People have to spend a lot of time reading this book and dealing with character, and I was fearful that people would not want to look at a book like this. I'm pleasantly surprised," says Wohl.

People are looking thanks in large part to the efforts of *Witchblade* co-writer Christina Z (her last name is a guarded secret at Top Cow), who claims to write from real life, rather than comics.

"My intent from the beginning was always to make *Witchblade* a very realistic, very human book," says Z. "We've all experienced weird and very real emotions and experiences in our lives. For *Witchblade* to really work, Sara had to become an emotional confidante to readers in a very real way," she says.

Wohl agrees, offering that the elements of uncertainty and doubt that permeate Sara's quest for answers in *Witchblade* are a big part of the book's real world look. "There is no specific mission or odyssey to guide her," he explains. "Sara is just this reluctant hero with a whole lot of problems. If she has a mission, she doesn't have a clue as to what it is. She's been thrust into this situation with the Witchblade attempting to control her. She's just trying to come to grips with this power and then decide if and when to use it."

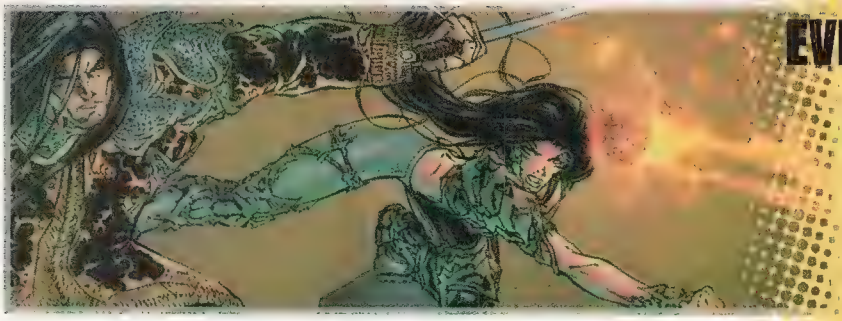
The origin of Sara and her unpredictable gauntlet began in 1995, when Silvestri and Top Cow were prepping their *Cyblade/Shi* crossover. "We were looking for a female character to go out in her own book and we felt Cyblade should stay in *Cyberforce*. But what we did not want was a Bad Girl. What we wanted was a character who would function in a realistic world, but who would also have the powers of a superhero. We knew the market was getting more sophisticated and we saw creating a character-driven book with a female character as a risk worth taking."

Witchblade (opposite) and her alter ego Sara Pezzini (above)

Silvestri and company batted around many ideas and eventually came up with the idea of a female cop and a tone not unlike the TV series "NYPD Blue." "Those early issues of *Witchblade* were essentially a more mature look at police life—the interaction between the characters around the police station and the types of crime they were involved in," offers Wohl.

After the mood was established, the idea of the Witchblade gauntlet was thrown onto the table. "We said, 'Okay, what does the gauntlet do? Why is it out there? Why is it on her?' Things started falling into place rather quickly," says Wohl.

Once *Witchblade* was given the green light at Top Cow, Wohl remembers that the *Witchblade* creators took the high road during a series of planning meetings. "With a lot of books, people try to think up things like origins, backgrounds and motivation after the book has already been out there. We decided in our early meetings to get all that stuff out in the open right away. When the time came to actually tell the



story, we already knew how characters would react to certain situations because we already had the nuts and bolts stuff figured out. The first eight issues of *Witchblade* basically wrote themselves."

But not without a writing process that, according to Christina Z, skirted the time-honored tradition of each member of a comic book team handling their own business and nobody else's.

"Since David and I are the co-writers, we usually come up with a lot of raw ideas on our own and then get together, over a long dinner, and throw them around until we come up with a basic plot. Then I'll go away and write the basic story in seven scenes, kind of like a screenplay, give it to Mike [Turner, the series' penciler] for his input and then pass it back to David, who does a polish. Then we'll show it to Mike again. I'm definitely more the emotional voice in *Witchblade* and David is the more clinical. But the combination of both of us has, so far, resulted in a very seamless style of storytelling."

Turner has a different take on the creative process. "We have our yelling matches and the 'No, I want this!' and the 'No, I want that!' " he admits. "But, in the end, we grab the book, look at it, go out and have a beer and say, 'Man! That turned out good!' "

Those yelling bouts must be getting more frequent, as Top Cow is working overtime to give fans of Sara and the Witchblade more good stuff. *Witchblade* is already making inroads into merchandising heaven. A 90-card sourcebook of information, written by Christina Z, is slated for an October release. Also on the horizon is a Clayburn Moore statue. And Silvestri reports that "a pretty big producer" has taken an option on *Witchblade* and is currently scouring the market for a film or television deal.

In the meantime, the series' creative team is planning a whole new set of story arcs to tantalize readers. *Witchblade* #9 gets the juices flowing when Sara goes toe-to-toe with the infamous "Microwave Murderer." The tension will mount when we discover the shocking true identity of the serial killer (Wohl hints that it is somebody readers are very familiar with), and the Witchblade, for a reason that will eventually come to light, refuses to do battle with this nemesis.

Issue #10 finds Sara running into the Silvestri/Garth Ennis creation The Darkness. Additionally, readers will be introduced to an old wielder of the Witchblade and learn the secrets surrounding why only a female can wear the gauntlet. And if that isn't enough, Silvestri hints that the katana-wielding Nottingham may not be quite dead.

Also on the *Witchblade* hot plate is a general breakdown of law and order among the organized crime types following the disappearance of crime mogul Kenneth Irons. The following story arc, beginning in issue #11, finds supporting character Lisa getting involved in the modeling industry, going to wild parties and having some bad things happen to her which will impact on Sara. Wohl offers that, by *Witchblade* #13, "Lisa will be a totally different person." And finally, Jake the cop and Sara will begin to develop an intimate relationship that will dissolve under the weight of a shocking surprise in that issue.

Surprises are par for the course in *Witchblade*, says Silvestri, who is reluctant to reveal all the secrets in store for readers.

"But we're planting seeds," he assures. "*Witchblade* is a mystery book as well as an action-adventure book. There are occasional red herrings and some real clues, but *Witchblade* is a book of subtleties. And so people should be looking at things more carefully." W

Marc Shapiro hit the casting couch recently with a "pretty big producer" for his own television deal. But he fell asleep.

EVERY WITCH WAY

Ann Bonny: pirate. She was a little crazy, a little reckless. A perfect candidate for the Witchblade.

"*Tales of the Witchblade* will cross back and forth between the fine lines of reality and fiction," explains *Tales* writer Christina Z. "It will be so seamless that everyone will think that this world really does exist."

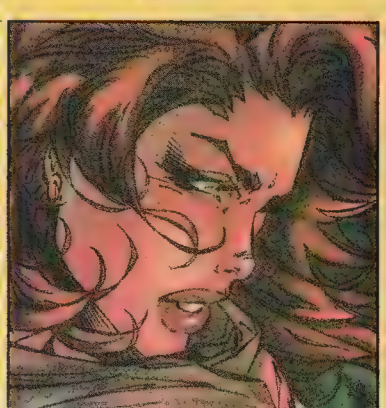
The quarterly, self-contained storybook leaps into stores in October. With Tony Daniel (*Spawn*) on pencils, the first of a revolving roster of cool artists, *Tales of the Witchblade* is taking a slightly divergent path than its parent book. Rather than a single, totally fictional heroine, *Tales of the Witchblade* will reflect on a number of history's great women and how the Witchblade figured into their lives and history.

"There are a lot of truly fantastic women in history who have done fantastic things," explains Z, "but a lot of these events in history were never really explained. My idea was that the Witchblade played a part in these historical events, and I wanted to tell those stories."

While Z is not willing to give up too much information regarding the storylines of the first two issues of *Tales*, she does offer that Ann Bonny (who we see as a part of the storyline in *Witchblade* #9) discovers the Witchblade and it helps her in her quest to become one of the most infamous pirates in history. The second *Tales* arc is slated to feature penciler Michael Lopez (*Voodoo/Zealot: Skin Trade*). In it, a woman made up of equal parts fictional and historically accurate female characters uses the Witchblade as her entry into some Feudal Era samurai adventures.

Witchblade co-creator David Wohl offers that "Christina is going into great detail to make these books historically accurate, and then throwing all these fantastic elements on top of it."

"It's a 'What If?' concept," he continues. "It's what would happen if real people found the Witchblade. But the difference is that it's a fantasy world where the Witchblade exists. So the books will run the gamut from totally true people with weird pasts to totally fictional people in real time periods." ■ *MS*



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FIRST LOOK

Gen13: Bootleg

Alan Davis and Mark Farmer throw the team for a loop (above), while Tomm Coker draws Terry Moore's romantic adventure (at right)

VITAL STATS

WHO?
Gen13

WHAT?
Gen13: Bootleg

DEBUT?
November

WHAT'S THE DEAL?
Comics' top talent brings you alternative takes on Gen13 on a monthly basis, fitting their stories in between the continuity of the regular *Gen13* series.

TODAY'S TOP CREATORS TAKE THEIR CRACK AT IMAGE'S SUPERTEAM

WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU MIX ONE OF fandom's favorite supergroups with the industry's top creators? You get *Gen13: Bootleg*, a new ongoing monthly series from Jim Lee's corner of Image Comics with stories by some of comics' premier artists and writers.

Bootleg's first two-part story arc is by Alan Davis and Mark Farmer, based on a plot by Farmer. Their story finds the team lost and separated in Lindquist's Fault, a portal to alternate realities, as each member discovers his or her heart's desire. Fairchild finds herself leading another band of heroes. Says Farmer, "They fight in a Neverneverland of constant battles where nobody really gets hurt and the baddies aren't really that bad. Roxy's dream is to get it on with Grunge in no uncertain terms."

Rainmaker's dream is to be lost in an Amazon jungle, completely alone. Unfortunately, Burnout has the same dream, only he wants to be lost with Rainmaker. Grunge, on the other hand, is in a totally relaxed world where he never has to use his powers. Farmer hints that Grunge is pivotal to the story's climax, when the team's desires turn into their darkest nightmares.

Terry Moore, of *Strangers in Paradise*, writes the second story arc, which is penciled by *Gen13/Maxx* artist Tomm Coker and combines romance and science fiction. Fairchild meets the love of her life on a library elevator. Although the elevator ride seemingly takes a few minutes, it has really taken 30 minutes of her life, and her new love has disappeared without a trace! After searching for him, she discovers that he was a Quantum Mechanics student at the University of California who died as a young man in 1943. Fairchild's search for this "dead" man brings the rest of the team into the adventure.

Gen13 co-creator Jim Lee is very excited about the new book, because it provides him with the opportunity to work with a wide range of top creative talent. Says Lee of *Bootleg*, "We do expect there to be character development and real changes in Gen13's status quo in this series. So the action will be taking place in both *Gen13: Bootleg* and the regular series. We'll get a different take on the characters, and I think that's exciting for the core *Gen13* readers to see."

Andy Lee, who fills the Generation X gap elsewhere in this issue, also has a dream to be lost in an Amazon jungle—with Qeelocke.

BY ANDY LEE

TRAILER PARK

Wizard's column about Hollywood and TV and stuff like that

HULK HEATS UP

By Rob Allstetter

"The Incredible Hulk" animated series is in full motion on the United Paramount Network, with many Marvel guest-stars slated for the rest of the first season's 13 episodes.

Greg Johnson, story editor for the series, gave *Wizard* the lowdown on upcoming episodes:

The season's fifth episode, written by Johnson and Bob Forward, is called "Innocent Blood," guest-stars **Ghost Rider** and is set in Chicago. The Hulk is shot with a tranquilizer ray by Major Talbot and must not transform back into Bruce Banner—or he will die. The Ghost Rider is in pursuit of the Hulk, knowing an injustice is about to be done to someone close to the Hulk, but not realizing that someone is actually Banner.

The TV Ghost Rider is the Danny Ketch version of the character and is voiced by **Richard Grieco** ("Marker"). The episode also serves as a pilot for a possible "Ghost Rider" series on UPN.

Veteran comics writer Len Wein penned the sixth episode, called "Man to Man, Beast to Beast." The story takes place in Canada and features the origin of Sasquatch. Johnson said he was "blown away" with the voice performances of Peter Strauss as Dr. Walter Langkowski and Clancy Brown (Lex Luthor on **"Superman"**) as Sasquatch.

"With a beast's voice, you don't think you could get that much range of emotion, but he was incredible," said Johnson of Brown's monstrous performance.

Doctor Doom is the villain of the seventh episode, called "Doomed." The story, written by Forward and set in Washington, D.C., incorporates the origin of Jennifer Walters as **She-Hulk**—albeit slightly altered from the comics.

Lisa Zane ("ER," "Profit") does the voice of She-Hulk. "She-Hulk came off really well, and next season you could see a lot more of her," Johnson said.

She-Hulk is also in the eighth episode, "Fantastic Fortitude," as she and Banner head to New York City to visit Reed Richards, who has just left on vacation. The Hulk, She-Hulk and **The Thing** must take on The Leader's Gamma Mutant Warriors, led by The Ogress. Chuck McCann reprises his "Fantastic Four" role as The Thing, and Kathy Ireland (Crystal on "FF") does the voice of The Ogress.

The episode was also written by Forward, whose credits include "WildC.A.T.s" and "Savage Dragon."

Watch for details on the remaining episodes of the first season of "The Incredible Hulk," including the season-ending three-parter, in future installments of "Trailer Park." Johnson told *Wizard* the first season will end with a surprise cliffhanger.

"HULK SMASH SUNDAY MORNINGS!"

"Everyone's confident there will be a second season," he noted. "But it's always hard to say. It could tank during the November sweeps, but I don't think it will. The animation is coming out well, and the music is great. If nothing else, every single episode is different than the others. It would have been easy to fall into a pattern with the savage Hulk falling into a fight with another Marvel character every episode."

MIGHTY MARVEL UPDATE

The **"Generation X"** live-action, syndicated television series from New World Entertainment is proceeding on schedule after media mogul Rupert Murdoch purchased New World in July. However, it is expected that Murdoch's ownership will change some of New World's plans, and it is possible that might affect "Generation X." Sources told *Wizard* that scripts for "Generation X" are expected to be submitted to New World in January, and casting will likely take place in March. Plans are for 22 episodes to air in syndication beginning next fall....Look for the final new episodes of the **"X-Men"** animated series airing on Fox to have dramatic changes in character and artistic design, keeping more in line with the current comics and their anime-flavored artistic style. There will also be new story elements—termed "interesting" by a source—to close out the series....Marvel is in advance discussions with the United Paramount Network for a prime-time animated series based on its **Mort, the Dead Teenager** character....The **"Blade"** live-action movie from New Line Cinema is now in pre-production. **Wesley Snipes** is scheduled to star as the vampire hunter. Filming should begin early next year.

CLOONEY BEATS THE HELL OUTTA SCHWARZENEGGER NEXT SUMMER

CLOONEY: SCRUBS AND A CAPE

George Clooney is pretty busy these days. Mondays through Thursdays, he's on the set of the top-rated TV series "ER" (for which he garnered a second Emmy nomination this year). The rest of the time, he's playing Bruce Wayne and the Caped Crusader in **"Batman and Robin,"** now in production for release next summer from Warner Bros.

"The best part of it is at the end of the movie I get to beat the hell out of **Arnold Schwarzenegger**," Clooney said at the recent Planet Hollywood opening in Tel Aviv, Israel. Schwarzenegger is playing Mr. Freeze in "Batman and Robin."

In other Bat-news, **Vivica Fox** ("Independence Day") has been cast as Mr. Freeze's moll. Akiva Goldsman, who wrote "Batman and Robin" and co-wrote "Batman Forever," will be writing and producing a new "Lost in Space" movie for New Line Cinema.

FORCE STILL WITH US

"Star Wars," George Lucas' 20-year-old blockbuster film which maintains legions of fans, is coming back for a theatrical re-release in February. Lucas has remastered the film and added about four minutes of new footage, including a scene between Harrison Ford's Han Solo and Jabba the Hutt.

Trailers for "Star Wars" shown before screenings of "Independence Day" this summer reportedly drew huge ovations.

Meanwhile, speculation continues to swirl about the next "Star Wars" trilogy, which will take place before the first three films' time period. Lucas has yet to sign with a studio for the next film, which will likely be in theaters before the end of the decade. Leading candidates appear to be 20th Century Fox—which distributed the first three films—and Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks.

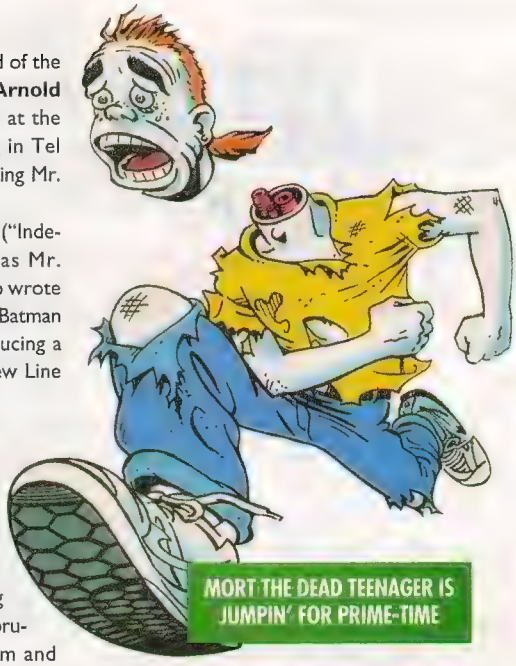
SUPER WRITING NEWS

Mark Evanier, writer of *Groo* and an animation veteran, is contributing to the **"Superman"** animated series on Kids' WB. He has written an episode tentatively scheduled for the first season called "Tools of the Trade."

"It features a number of [Jack] Kirby characters, including Kanto, Ugly Mannheim and Darkseid," Evanier said. "Kanto the Weapons Master supplies Mannheim's Earth Intergang squad with Apokoliptian weaponry with which to mount a crime wave in Metropolis. I believe this is the first episode produced with Darkseid, though it may not be the first aired."

Warner Bros. could not provide *Wizard* with air-dates for the upcoming episodes.

Evanier has also teamed with Howard the Duck creator Steve Gerber to write episodes for future seasons. One is called "Father's Day," which introduces Kalibak into the series. Another features super-escape artist Mister Miracle.



MORT THE DEAD TEENAGER IS JUMPIN' FOR PRIME-TIME

CAST OF STEEL

The live-action **"Steel"** movie, based on the DC Comics character and starring Los Angeles Lakers center **Shaquille O'Neal**, began production in August in Los Angeles.

Judd Nelson, best known as a "Brat Pack" actor from the mid-1980s, will play the film's villain, Nathaniel Burke, an arms manufacturer. Nelson's recent credits include "New Jack City" and "Airheads."

Annabeth Gish will play Lt. Sparks, an ally of Steel. Her credits include "Nixon" and "Wyatt Earp." Richard Roundtree, best known from "Shaft," plays another friend of Steel who helps develop his armor. Roundtree recently appeared in "Seven."

"Steel," written and directed by Kenneth Johnson, is expected in theaters next summer from Warner Bros.

BRUNO BEHIND VIRUS

John Bruno is ready to spread his **"Virus."** An 18-year veteran of movie visual effects, Bruno is making his directing debut with a live-action film based on the 1993 Dark Horse comic book by Chuck Pfarrer. "Virus," from Universal, Dark Horse and Pacific West Productions, will have a $40 million budget and is expected to begin production in North Carolina in October for release next August.

"It's going to be really scary," Bruno said at a recent convention. "The head of the studio insisted that it be even bloodier and gorier than I wanted to do."

One change from the comic will be that the film will be set at sea. "We changed it to

"VIRUS" IS DARK HORSE'S NEXT BIG PIC

a Russian ship and put the whole story in a hurricane nightmare," Bruno said.

Bruno started as a cartoonist and animator and worked on the "Heavy Metal" movie. He broke into live-action movies with "Ghostbusters" and has been a frequent collaborator with director/producer Jim Cameron. He also worked on "Batman Returns."

Pfarrer, a screenwriter, brought the "Virus" concept to Dark Horse in 1992 as a film project. "The comic series illustrated the story's potential and certainly helped the Universal executives make their decision to go ahead with this project," said Dark Horse president **Mike Richardson**, who will be an executive producer. "Virus" will be produced by Gale Anne Hurd.

Bruno recently teamed with Cameron on the new "Terminator 2" 3-D attraction in Florida. While **Spider-Man** movie rights remained tied up in litigation, Bruno said Cameron's follow-up to the in-production "Titanic" will likely be a third **Terminator** film.

'SAILOR MOON' SINKS

This was one S.O.S. that went unanswered.

The many zealous fans of "Sailor Moon," the Japanese animated series syndicated in the United States by DIC Entertainment, formed "Save Our Sailor" groups to voice their love of the series, but they could not prevent "Sailor Moon" from cancellation in the United States. Reruns of the first season's 65 episodes aired until early September, and DIC said in a release that the show is no longer being produced for U.S. viewing because of "disappointing ratings."

According to DIC figures, "Sailor Moon" aired in more than 87 stations, representing 84 percent of the country. However, the half-hour show—based on the adventures of a 14-year-old girl who stars in a series of Japanese books from Kodansha—was often relegated to poor, early-morning time periods.

"While 'Sailor Moon' continues to enjoy tremendous worldwide success across Europe and Asia, the kids' syndication business in the U.S. is extremely competitive with very few choice time periods, and this ultimately limited the potential to build a large audience," DIC president Andy Heyward said in a statement.

"We're proud of the production, and we felt it was one of our best properties, because 'Sailor Moon' met the needs of the under-served girls' audience."

Heyward did not return *Wizard*'s calls, but a representative of his office said that he was "well aware of the show's following." The company also noted that it "will continue to explore ways for the show to return to the air."

Meanwhile, in Canada, "Sailor Moon" has been renewed through the 1998 television season and two more runs of the 65 episodes by Global Television and Y-TV. The series continues to air on the Seven Network in Australia, premiered on New Zealand's TVNZ in September and is in its fifth season of prime-time broadcast in Japan. For the latest "Sailor Moon" news, DIC suggests fans call a hotline at (818) 955-5405.

FLASH IN THE FALL

Here's a sneak preview of some upcoming episodes of **Flash Gordon**'s new animated series, which premiered this September: "Fangs of Fury" has the Lionid princess Thundar forced to choose between her mother and Flash; in "Terror Beneath the Waves," Flash is held prisoner underwater by Queen Kayla and her Shark People; "Moon of Mystery" teams Flash and Ming the Merciless' daughter Aura in an effort to protect the inhabitants of a moon from Ming (who's now a green-skinned, humanoid lizard); and "Rocket to Oblivion" has Flash, Dale (now a Eurasian teenager) and Dr. Zarkov attempt to escape from Mongo and return to Earth in an experimental spaceship (which unbeknownst to them has a bomb on it). All of these episodes should air in October and November. Future episodes include a plot to overthrow Ming;

Celebrity Profile

RUDY COBY

Rudy Coby was hard to miss at comic conventions this past summer. He is, after all, "The Coolest Magician on Earth," and if you didn't recognize him from his two Fox television specials or touring live show, he certainly drew most people's attention with his big hair, lab coat and checkered shoes.

At the cons, Coby was promoting his new ongoing *LabMan* comic book series from Image that is scheduled to begin in October. The series is drawn by Andrew Suriano, a designer for Coby's stage show, and is based on Coby's way-out characters, including Nikki Terminator, The Hourglass, The Lounge Lizard and The Cheese Gang.

Wizard caught the hyperactive Coby in a rare downtime period. He talked about his passion for magic—and comics—and then disappeared.

Comic books: "Before I found magic, I used to read comic books when I was four, five, six-years-old. Then I found magic [when I was] around nine-years-old, and it became an obsession."

The *LabMan* comic: "I write it, create it and obsess over every page. It's sort of a bible for the television show and the live show. It's based on the character that I created. The TV show is based on the comic, not the other way around. The initial series sort of serves as a screenplay for a 'LabMan' movie."

A movie?: "We're shopping it around and I hope to have a deal by the end of the year."

Favorite current comics: "I always liked *Spider-Man*. Now, I especially like *Bone* and *Batman & Robin Adventures*."

Working with Image: "Their first priority is quality. It was the easiest contract I've ever signed. They didn't try to steal the character."

More television: "Yes. The next special will hopefully be on in the November sweeps."

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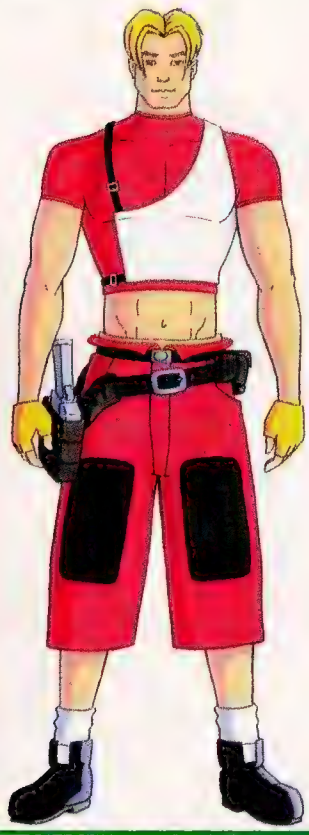
Flash against Aura in the Mongonian Aural Games; Dale joining forces with Prince Barin, one of Ming's supporters; and Flash and Ming having to work together to survive.



MEET THE NEW FLASH GORDON–A SKATEBOARDIN' HIPSTER!

SHORT TAKES

Kevin Smith, director of "Mallrats," has been asked to re-write the next live-action **Superman** film, due to start production next summer. The film reportedly adapts 1992's "Death of Superman" story, and may have cameos by other DC heroes during the hero's funeral. Also, Smith's "Chasing Amy" film, which features cameos by several comics professionals, has been picked up by Miramax....**D.B. Sweeney**, who starred in the Fox TV series "Strange Luck" last season, has been added to the cast of the live-action **Spawn** movie, now in production for New Line Cinema in Los Angeles. According to Beau Smith of Todd McFarlane Productions, Sweeney will play the role of Spawn's best friend, Terry Fitzgerald. Also, Smith reports that **Martin Sheen** ("Apocalypse Now," "Wall Street") will play Jason Wynn and that Chapel apparently will be a female character in the film. "Spawn" stars Michael Jai White in the title role and John Leguizamo as the Clown. It is being directed by Mark Dippe....**Flea**, a member of the recently disbanded Red Hot Chili Peppers, will likely be doing the voice of Grunge in the **Gen13** animated movie, sources told *Wizard*. Next month's "Trailer Park" should have a complete voice cast....Jim Valentino told *Wizard* that the USA Network has passed on a **ShadowHawk** animated series... **"The Flash,"** the live-action television series which starred John Wesley Shipp and aired on CBS from September 1991 to July 1992, will be rebroadcast on the Sci-Fi Channel beginning in October. Among the villains were **Mark Hamill** as The Trickster and David Cassidy as the Mirror Master....**"The Phantom"** is being called one of last summer's box-office bombs. The movie, from Paramount Pictures, took in less than $18 million in the U.S....Sources tell *Wizard* that the **"Zen: Intergalactic Ninja"** live-action movie, to be directed by Brian Yuzna, could begin production as early as late October....According to *Daily Variety*, early November is the airtime for the special episode of **"Star Trek: Deep Space Nine"** (called "Trials and Tribbleations") which will have Captain Sisko (Avery Brooks) traveling back in time, where he will interact with the original "Star Trek" cast through effects similar to those used in "Forrest Gump."...**"Millennium,"** the new series from "The X-Files" creator Chris Carter, will premiere on the Fox Network on Oct. 25. "X-Files" will be shown in the Friday 9 p.m. (ET) time period until the debut of "Millennium," and then it will move to its new time period of Sundays at 9 p.m. (ET) beginning on Oct. 27....**Fox Children's Network**'s programming schedule for 1996-97 includes a Saturday morning lineup of "Big Bad Beetleborgs," "Casper," "Spider-Man," "Goosebumps," "Life with Louie," "X-Men" and "The Tick." Weekday afternoons from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (ET), you'll see "Eek!Stravaganza," "The Adventures of Batman & Robin," "Big Bad Beetleborgs" and "Power Rangers Zeo."...Hearst Entertainment has signed a deal with Disney for a live-action movie based on Lee Falk's **Mandrake the Magician**....Brad Foxhoven of Top Cow Productions told *Wizard* that negotiations for a live-action **Witchblade** film were continuing....Bonnie Arnold, who produced Disney's box-office smash "Toy Story," will also be producing the animated **"Tarzan"** movie for the studio. Kevin Lima and Chris Buck will direct....Physically-challenged Superman film actor **Christopher Reeve** spoke at the Democratic National Convention on Aug. 26 in Chicago, asking for more funding for medical research in the U.S., and noting, "America does not let its needy citizens fend for themselves."...Brand-new episodes of **"Street Sharks"** will air on ABC on Saturday mornings until Nov. 2. Reruns of the series are being broadcast by the USA Network....Director John Carpenter ("Escape from L.A.") has been linked to **"Mutant Chronicles,"** a movie from Pressman Films based on the collectible card game....John Nicolella is directing the **"Kull the Conqueror"** film now in production for Universal. **Kevin Sorbo** ("Hercules: The Legendary Journeys") stars in the title role, and **Tia Carrere** ("Wayne's World") plays an evil sorceress. The script was written by Charles Pogue....The **"WildC.A.T.s"** animated series, which aired in reruns this past season on the USA Network, is now considered dead, with no new episodes planned....NBC will rebroadcast **"Jurassic Park"** on Dec. 1....The soundtrack to **"The Crow: City of Angels"** reached the top five on the Billboard album charts—before the movie was released....Ideal Entertainment has acquired the television and movie rights to Sega's video game character **VectorMan**. W

KEVIN SMITH TAKES A CRACK AT THE MAN OF STEEL

Rob Allstetter, like most guys, likes cheese.

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Casting Call

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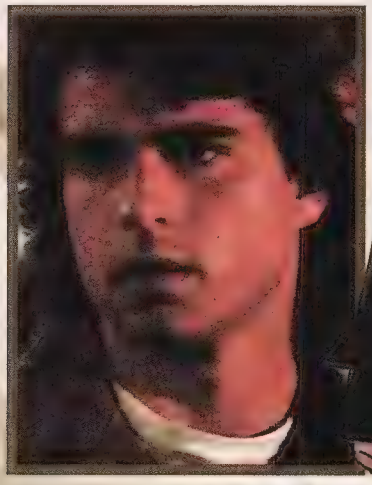
Who would we cast? Take a look-see.



JESSE CUSTER

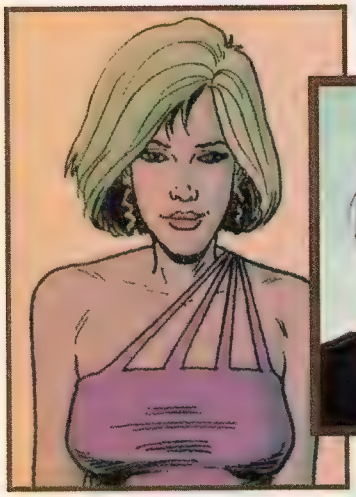
Jesse needs to look like an average, clean-cut kinda guy, but he's also gotta exude the true terror of a demon. Jason Patric ("The Lost Boys," "Geronimo") would fit this role pretty damn good.

By a bunch of *Wizard* staffers

All photos: Everett Collection, unless otherwise noted.

CASSIDY

For the role of Cassidy, we need someone who could look like a real scumbag with one helluva boot-up-your-ass attitude. Who better than Sean Penn ("Casualties of War," "Dead Man Walking")?

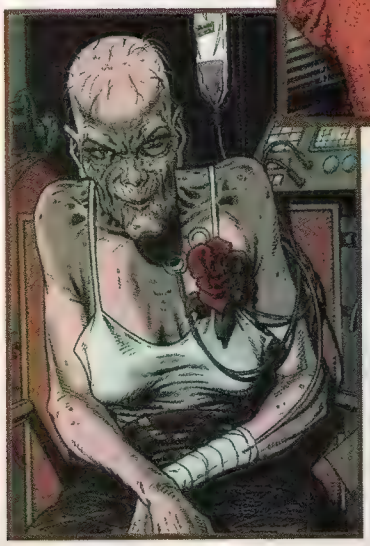


TULIP O'HARE

Jesse's girlfriend has to be tough, yet soft, and she's gotta be pretty handy with a gun. Lauren Holly ("Picket Fences," "Dumb and Dumber") has everything we're looking for in Miss O'Hare.

ARSEFACE

With a little makeup (all right, a *lot* of makeup), we think Elijah Wood ("The Good Son," "Flipper") would be great as everyone's favorite disfigured teen.

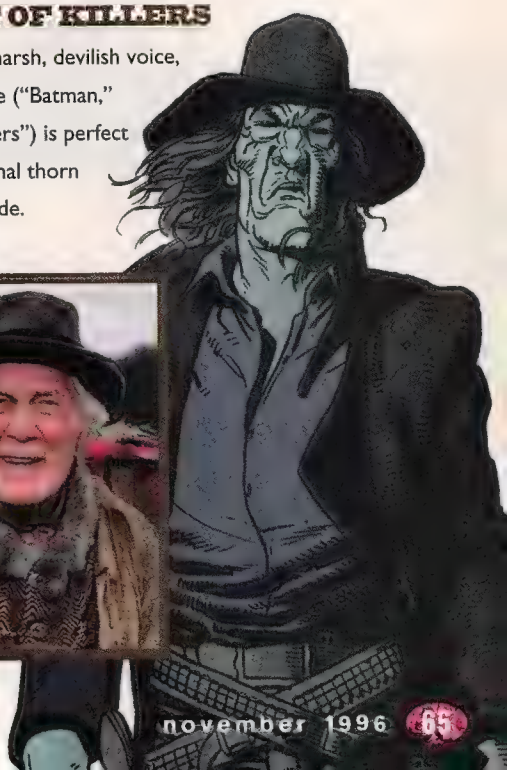


GRAN'MA MARIE

Having done some roles where she's looked old, wrinkly and downright scary, Cloris Leachman ("The Beverly Hillbillies," "Prancer") could play Jesse's sadistic grandmother to a T.

SAINT OF KILLERS

With that harsh, devilish voice, Jack Palance ("Batman," "City Slickers") is perfect as the eternal thorn in Jesse's side.



JESUS DE SADE

To play the rich and totally loathsome Jesus, we need someone who can be really wicked and depraved. Christopher Walken ("Batman Returns," "Biloxi Blues") has certainly played that type of role well.

SHERIFF ROOT

R. Lee Ermey ("Seven," "Full Metal Jacket") has shown he can be one mean S.O.B. when he has to. That's why we chose him for the tough-as-nails Sheriff Root.

T.C.

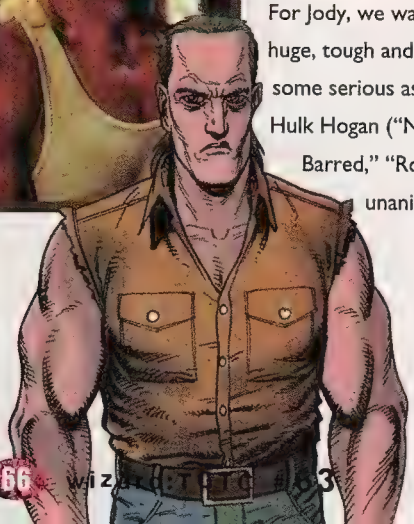
No judgment here on his personal life, but Tracey Walter ("Repo Man," "Batman") is the only actor who could do justice to Jody's sex-crazed, chicken-lovin' psycho pal.

THE DUKE

Only one person can play John Wayne appropriately, and that's the Duke himself. We'll just do that "Forrest Gump" special effects stuff and bring the Duke back to life!

JODY

For Jody, we wanted someone huge, tough and able to kick some serious ass. Pro wrestler Hulk Hogan ("No Holds Barred," "Rocky III") was a unanimous decision.



HERR STARR

John Shea ("Lois & Clark") has the perfect, high-and-mighty, nasty attitude to play Starr. Besides, he looks good bald. W

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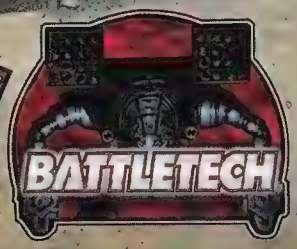

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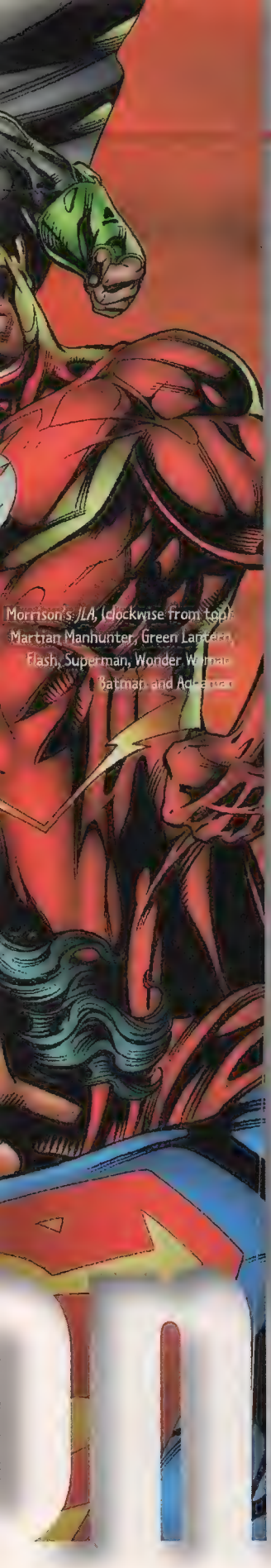


Morrison's *JLA*, (clockwise from top): Martian Manhunter, Green Lantern, Flash, Superman, Wonder Woman, Batman, and Aquaman

BY MATTHEW BRADY

BREAKING AWAY FROM HIS VERTIGO REP, GRANT MORRISON GEARS UP FOR DC'S A-LIST SUPERHEROES IN *JLA*

Grant Morrison is trying to ditch a stereotype. To most readers, Morrison is "that Vertigo guy" who has given fans such oddball characters as Dorothy, the ape-faced girl in *Doom Patrol*, and Lord Fanny, the transvestite magician in *The Invisibles*. Heck, in *Animal Man*, Morrison even had a conversation with the title character in the last issue he wrote. Most fans think that weird stories are all this guy does.

Not true.

Morrison, a low-keyed Scotsman with an at times nearly indecipherable accent, has revealed that his first true love is superheroes. Having grown up on a steady diet of American comics, Morrison was the kid in his neighborhood in Glasgow who acted out the stories he read, running around with a bath towel cape, like many of the rest of us.

First making waves while working on DC's *Animal Man* in the late '80s, Morrison went on to turn the faltering *Doom Patrol* into a cult favorite, remaining on the title for nearly four years. Following his *Doom Patrol* run, Morrison (joined by Mark Millar) went on to write the offbeat *Skrull Kill Krew* for Marvel, four highly regarded issues of *Swamp Thing* and *The Invisibles*, his own project at Vertigo. While his books received critical attention, Morrison laid low, slightly out of the fan-favorite arena.

Morrison's time out of the spotlight ended earlier this summer when DC announced that he would be writing the new *JLA* series, composed of what many fans feel to be the "true" Justice League of America: Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Green Lantern, Flash and Martian Manhunter. At the same time, Morrison and Millar's *Aztek, The Ultimate Man* hit the stands to critical and fan approval. "That Vertigo guy" has come over to mainline superheroes. What's the deal with the switch? Who is this guy anyway? These are just some of the questions we wanted to ask him. One trans-Atlantic phone call later, here's what we found out.

WIZARD: Let's start with the usual: When did you get your start in comic books?

GRANT MORRISON: It's a pretty confusing answer. I started out way back in school, around 1978. As a teenager, I got some work with a kind of science fiction magazine that was based in Edinburgh, which is near Glasgow, Scotland. The magazine was put together by a bunch of hippies and called *Near Myth*. It ran for four or five issues, and gave me a chance to do anything. And the guys paid me money for it, so it was pretty exciting back then.

I was writing and drawing stories for *Near Myth*. The character from the magazine was named Gideon Stargrave, who was kind of a mod assassin. Gideon actually turned up recently in *The Invisibles*, so I guess I've kind of gone full circle. I didn't actually go full time as a writer until 1986, which is when I started writing stories for *2000 A.D.* here in Britain.

And the move to DC came on the heels of that?

Yeah, pretty soon after. I'd done the "Zenith" series in *2000 A.D.* It was the story of a pop-star superhero who was what I'd be like if I had super-powers. That one did pretty well. The people at DC saw it, and they asked me to come over in the second wave of people after Alan Moore had made a mark writing *Swamp Thing*.

While you've been at DC, you've been associated with the Vertigo side of things. Now with *Aztek* and *Justice League of America*, it looks like you're moving back to mainstream heroes. What's the deal?

Its kind of weird that people were associating me with that kind of Vertigo stuff, because out of 300 stories I've written, only 30 of them have been through Vertigo. Obviously, that's where I made my mark. As for the mainstream heroes, I was looking around and starting to realize that the stuff I was starting to enjoy most was the new superhero stuff, particularly Mark Waid's stories on *Flash*, along with the other stuff that he's been doing, and Kurt Busiek's *Astro City*. Those are the superhero comics that I've always wanted to do—a bit more upbeat, a bit more positive and a bit more imaginative than the stuff we've been getting in the post-*Dark Knight Returns* era. I wanted to get back into that because it seemed that we were finally doing comics for kids again. I think we've left out the kids for the last 10 years, and have been going more for the adult reader.

Where did the idea for a *JLA* relaunch come from?

It just happened to be the right time. I spoke with Mark Waid about this, and he said that even if it would've been a day later, it probably wouldn't have gone through. It just so happened that the market's been pretty rough, and the book, as it was, wasn't selling. I'd sent in proposals for a number of things, and one of them happened to be Justice League. DC said, "Yeah, we do need these guys. We do need the big guns. We need Superman, Batman, Flash and Wonder Woman to be in the Justice League." I just got lucky. It was the right time.

So your take on *JLA* will be a more positive look at superheroics rather than a darker one?

Yeah. We've had the darker style going for about 10 years now since *The Dark Knight Returns*, and it worked for a while, but I don't think it really works anymore. I know I've

Name: Grant Morrison
Occupation: Writer
Born: January 31, 1960 in Glasgow, Scotland
Base of Operations: Glasgow, Scotland
Career Highlights: Acclaimed runs on *Animal Man* and *Doom Patrol*, the *Arkham Asylum* graphic novel and is now gearing up for the high profile *Justice League of America* in November.
Least favorite misconception about Scottish people: "That we wear anything at all underneath our kilts."
Has he ever worn a kilt? "I've never worn a kilt, but Mark Millar has on a number of occasions, and I've seen him, and I know that I never want to look like that."

done a few things along those darker lines, but again, when I was doing something like *Doom Patrol*, to me that was hearkening back to the comics I used to read as a kid—which were pretty mad. The superhero stuff that I've enjoyed doing in the past, like "Zenith" or *Doom Patrol* had darker elements, but there was still that kind of playfulness of the old comics.

What tone are you giving the book?

The way I'm looking at it is the classic group, and it's got the classical superheroes in it, so I'm trying to give it a kind of mythical feel, a Biblical feel. Real widescreen stuff—a hundred-million-dollar budget movie kind of feel. I think that's the only way to do the Justice League. It's got to be widescreen, big-feel kind of stuff.

Will the *JLA* be facing the global crisis every month, or smaller threats?

They'll be facing pretty big-type, time-spanning global crises on a fairly regular basis, but obviously, every so often we'll have to have fairly smaller scale stories, so we get to know the characters a bit. In something like the X-Men, you can concentrate a lot more on character development, but the Justice League characters all have their own books, so you have to look at them through a different angle, because they have their own books to deal with the personal stuff. So we'll be juggling between the big crises and the smaller stories, but definitely the accent on a book like this is the real big crises. Also, we plan to bring back some of the big high-concept science-fiction that used to be in the book, but adapt it into what modern audiences expect.

Did you read *Justice League of America* when you were growing up?

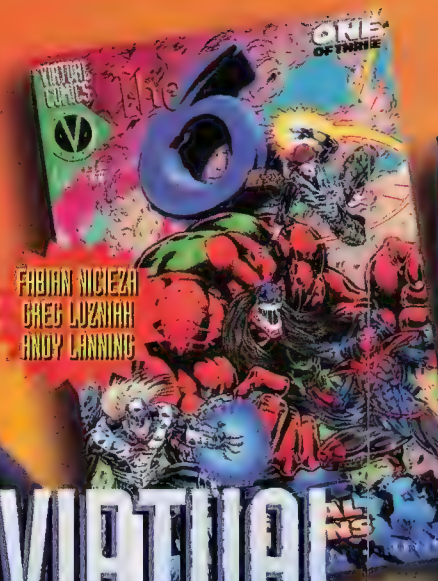
Oh God, yes. It was my favorite comic. One of the earliest stories I remember was the Anti-Matter Man story where the Spectre was trying to hold two universes apart. That was just this fabulous image that stuck in my mind. When I really started collecting comics, Len Wein was writing the *JLA*, and those were just my favorite comics: great plot, great ideas and great character development. That's the kind of feel that I want to get back into. Also, I'm looking at what's been going on with Image Comics, and where the market stands now, so I've been aware of what kids are into, and I'll inject a bit more imagination into those type of stories.

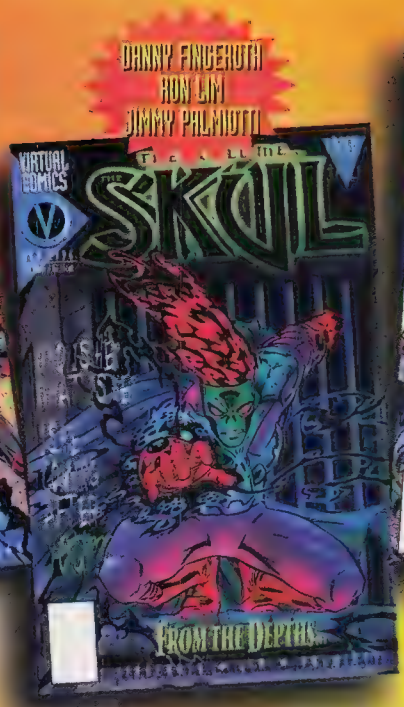
You've already hinted that you plan to bring back some of the classic League villains. Who will you be drawing on?

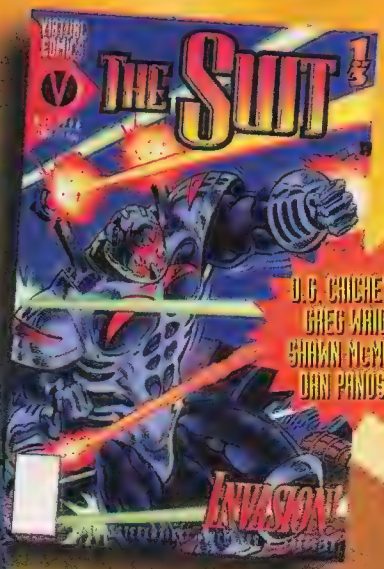
The first old villain who's coming back is The Key. He's just one of those guys who looked cool, but I have no idea what he ever did, and I don't think anyone else ever did either. So, we'll give him some kind of rationale and make him a major villain. The Timelord will also be coming back in the *JLA/WildC.A.T.s* crossover, and again, we'll be taking a kind of goofy character and boosting him up into a real major threat, which is quite good fun. That's as far as I've gotten so far. I've taken the names, more than anything else, and have been revamping all those old villains, but I'll be making some new ones up as well.

Obviously, a lot of the old Justice League members from the recently canceled series won't be around. Will you be dealing with the members who didn't "make the cut"?

Yeah, in issue #5, we'll have a look at all the people who are sitting on the sidelines, moaning about being kept out of this elitist superteam. In a membership drive, we'll get to see some of the people trying to make the grade and failing. Also, Green Arrow is going to make the grade and be the first new member.







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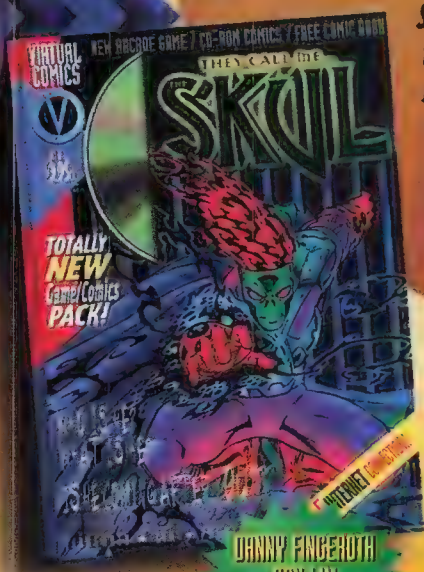

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Design: Arnie Sawyer Studios, Inc

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One of the heroes you've been trying to get into the League is Plastic Man. Will Plas be joining the team?

Everybody seems up for it now, but they didn't trust me in the first place, so I had to convince them that I had a way to do it. Again, we'll be dealing with what seems to be like a pantheon of gods, and to me Plastic Man is the trickster character. He's in there to sort of throw a spanner in the works. I just can't wait to do it, because I want to write him as Jim Carrey being Ace Ventura, just completely over the top.

Will there be a leader of the League? It seems that all of the characters really don't take well to being anyone's second banana.

That will be very interesting, because the characters have changed so much. Back in the past we had a bunch of clones basically, all with the same smile and slightly different colored hair. What we've got now is characters who have been developed and built up a bit more. So, yeah, there will be a lot of tension, but nevertheless, everyone looks at Superman as the leader, because he is the big guy. He's uneasy in the role and we'll see how he deals with it, knowing that he has to be the leader.

Each character has different strengths as well. For example, on some issues, Batman will defer to the Martian Manhunter, because he's got more of a tactical mind. The book will also be about these characters trying to learn to be a team again, which is quite difficult for a lot of them.

Speaking of characters being difficult, Aquaman has been portrayed as someone who does his own thing and has recently fought against the League. Is he going to fit in well?

Not at all. He's the most difficult one—the one character I've found the hardest to write, because the way Peter David's been doing him has been set undersea pretty much, where he's been dealing with arcane events. To suddenly throw him into a team like this, he's going to be quite abrasive and difficult to deal with. We'll have Wonder Woman take him in hand, because the two of them are both royalty and they both have the same kind of warrior attitude. So Wonder Woman will constantly give him a hard time, and he will eventually admit that he is needed in the League.

Of all the characters in the group, which one are you finding easiest to write?

It seems to be that Superman, Flash and Green Lantern are the ones that have really come the easiest. Flash and Green Lantern are interesting, because these guys really don't get along anymore, but I've found that they work best as a team. They'll eventually acknowledge the fact that even though they don't along, they still work best as a team.

What's working with a relative newcomer like artist Howard Porter been like so far?

Howard's been very good. The way I usually work is to send off the script and never speak to the artist until I see it, but he's been doing some great stuff. Every issue's been getting better and better. Howard is really adding the high-tech feel that I want for this as well—kind of a 21st century feel—which the Justice League needs as we move into the new millennium. I'm really pleased with what he's doing.

Is writing this version of the League intimidating at all?

Not really. First, I've got this huge ego to draw off of [*laughs*], but it's just this great fun, because this is the sort of thing I'd loved to have done when I was young. I used to make up Justice League stories when I was a kid and act them out, and now suddenly I'm getting paid to do it. Hopefully, the sheer enjoyment I'm having will come through, and the readers will pick up on that.

I could worry about it because there's so many of these big guys, and so many problems inherent in that, because I have to deal with a lot of different editors and make sure I'm not stepping on anyone's toes. Nevertheless, just getting into that playground is fantastic.

Moving from *JLA* to your other superhero book, how's *Aztek* doing?

The reception has been pretty good. Aztek is going to be in the Justice League, so we'll have the set-up for that coming up.

The whole idea behind *Aztek* really is to show a completely different perspective of the DC Universe and suggest things that people might not notice about that world, things that we haven't seen before. For example, we've got a story coming up where Aztek goes though Justice League initiation. We've never seen this before. How do people get into the Justice League, and how do they recognize each other in secret identities? We've got it so its almost Masonic with a secret handshake and things like that, and Aztek has to learn all this stuff. So yeah, we're having fun with that—just kind of taking that different kind of look at the DC Universe.

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Decent Proposal

Wizard figured it might be neat to glimpse at the words that started it all. So here are excerpts taken from Grant Morrison's original proposal submitted to DC Comics in an effort to relaunch *JLA*.

"The way I see it, *JLA* is the prototype superteam book of the modern superhero age. The Justice League begat the Fantastic Four, the Avengers and everything right down to the latest team from Extreme Studios.

"All superteams have a central concept which makes them work. For instance, the X-Men started as a school, the Avengers as a football team, the FF as a family unit and so on. The Justice League of America were a kind of super United Nations protecting the Earth from world-threatening menaces.

"...The strength of the Justice League lies in the fact that it actually *can* boast a membership comprised of the World's Greatest Superheroes. These guys are the *originals*. DC's got 'em and to overlook them in favor of cast-offs from teams that didn't work in the first place is to miss out on the stately *gravitas* which should be part of the appeal of the Justice League. With a book like *JLA*, the reader should feel that he's being given a privileged glimpse into the halls of the immortals, eavesdropping on the councils of superhumans who stand between mankind and its would-be conquerors."

Superman: "The guiding light behind this new Justice League. Superman in the League should be a slightly troubled individual, putting on a brave face to inspire the others but knowing all the time that he's perhaps bitten off a little more than he can chew."

Batman: "Batman's always been uncomfortable as a team player... and I can't see him being too happy here. I love the idea that not only could Batman defeat any one of them if push came to shove, but also that they *know* it."

Flash: "He, along with Green Lantern, is indispensible to the League. [Flash] has been a team player for most of his superhero career. [He's] always on hand to keep up morale and team spirit. In this sense, he's the natural second-in-command after Superman. But where Superman can't help being a little lofty and remote, the Flash is right in there with the human touch."

Green Lantern: "Kyle Rayner's a new kid on the superhero block. He's a lot more flamboyant than Hal Jordan ever was and the other members of the team may find his extravagant ringwork a little bombastic and irritating."

Aquaman: "I see him as the sort of character who might make the others a little nervous. He's got this majestic, warrior demeanor and a slightly wild quality that sets him apart."

Wonder Woman: "[She] quite likes being the only female on the team. The other team members don't quite have a handle on the warrior spirit she both admires and embodies."

Martian Manhunter: "[He's] the elder statesman of the group. I want to write him like one of those great Indian warriors—talking from the heart, the last proud member of a lost tribe, willing to give his life at a moment's notice for his adopted planet." ■ *Sorrell Booke*

Mark [Millar] just wrote an issue where he revealed that villains aren't allowed to wisecrack unless they've reached a certain level of accomplishment in the supervillain community, and the other crazy rules they have. It's things like this that are always there in comics, but we've never really looked for them before.

Speaking of Mark Millar, you work with him quite a bit. How did your writing relationship with him come about?

Mark was originally a fan who'd interviewed me for a magazine over here, and we just got on pretty well. We started drinking together and did some Judge Dredd for *2000 A.D.*, and then the *Swamp Thing* job came up, so I wrote the first four issues with him, and he went on with it. We decided to do something else, so we started *Aztek* because we wanted to get back into the DC Universe. That was the first project we proposed to them. Now Mark's doing his Superman book [*Red Son*, an "Elseworlds" story to be released next summer], which looks fantastic.

How would you describe yourself and your interests as a writer?

It's hard to say, because I try to re-invent myself all the time, which is why everyone thinks I'm this young turk. Actually, I've been doing this for years. If anything, I'd suppose I'd call myself eclectic. I came into the whole punk thing when I was a teenager, and that kind of influenced me in the way that you could just take stuff from anywhere–from high culture, low culture, TV shows, movies, weird science textbooks, whatever. So, yeah, the only thing that I could say to people is that the work I do is fairly diverse, at least it has been up to now. So it's kind of hard to say, "If you come here, you'll get this." My writing is just somebody's particularly twisted perspective on this stuff.

What would you say to someone who's unsure about giving your stuff a try?

God, what would I say? I wish someone else would say it other than me. I'd just tell them it's great. If you come to comics, I promise I'll give you the superheroes you're looking for, and the ones that people have wanted to see for years, but haven't quite had for a while. You'll see stuff you've never seen before and it will be worth your buck ninety-five.

One of my favorite things in reading other people's comics is when you get someone's head coming through, undiluted, and you see where their interests and what they're into, *and* that they're not copying anyone else. I'd like to think that people who come to my stuff will get a unique viewpoint. Nowadays, I think comics desperately need that. W

Matthew Brady, who profiles Vampirella elsewhere in this issue, doesn't wear anything underneath his kilt either.

Aztek, DC's newest oddball superhero

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Yeah, *that* Witchblade. It's a nifty mystical gauntlet that can only be worn by one person in each generation—and Sara's the bearer for this era. But maybe if you can design a Witchblade of your own, you'll get the next best thing to the glove itself.

Original Witchblade art!

How To Play

Simple. Design your own Witchblade glove. Take a look at this original and see how you could spiff it up and personalize it. Come up with an original and cool design, 'cause winners will be chosen based on quality and creativity and could win these...

...Witchy Prizes

Grand Prize (1): One reader who turns in the best Witchblade will receive a Michael Turner/D-Tron piece of original Witchblade art and have their glove shown in a future issue of *Witchblade!* And, since we're so darned nice, we'll even kick in a *Witchblade* trade paperback boxed set autographed by the creative team of David Wohl, Christina Z., Michael Turner and D-Tron.

Runner-up (10): Ten readers with cool gloves will each receive a *Witchblade* trade paperback boxed set autographed by the creative team of David Wohl, Christina Z., Michael Turner and D-Tron.

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No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Top Cow Productions and their immediate families or any lactose intolerants. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch index card and attach to your entry. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Make Your Own Witchblade Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. Christina Z.? D-Tron? What the hell kind of names are these? Are these people afraid of full names? **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by November 29, 1996.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected based on quality and creativity from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press and Top Cow Comics. Judging will take place on December 16, 1996. For a list of winners, available after December 16, 1996, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Make Your Own Witchblade Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Fill this sucker out, attach it to your entry, put it in an envelope and send it off to: Make Your Own Witchblade Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. Deadline is November 29, 1996. So draw! The picture, that is...

DEADLINE IS NOV. 29, 1996!

Make your own Witchblade Entry Form

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Did you attach your entry, numbskull?

All Dressed

Casualties of the fifth annual *Wizard* Halloween Costume Contest

SANDMAN
***Eric Lee**, Ridgewood, NY*

DISTURBINGLY ENTERTAINING, the annual *Wizard* Halloween Costume Contest never fails to prove one thing: our readers have waaaaay too much free time. But what better way to win all kinds of free crap? To prove it, each and every one of the freaks pictured here will walk away with a utility belt just chock-full o' Batman "Holoween" goodies! Everyone here gets a copy of the new *Batman: The Long Halloween* #1 autographed by creators Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale, *and* a complete Fleer/SkyBox International *Batman Holo Series* set (all 50 hologram cards, *plus* the four chase cards)!

Our Grand Prize freak among freaks will get all that, *plus* a piece of Tim Sale original art from *The Long Halloween*!

Thanks to DC Comics, Fleer/SkyBox and Loeb and Sale for their generous donations.

Now go forth and get bite-size Milky Way bars!

GHOST
***Heather Horn**, Bellevue, OH*

ZSASZ
***Luke Zentner**, Eugene, OR*

Up with No Place to Go

LOKI
Bill Kieth
Seaside, NJ

ELEKTRA
Dawn Northington, *Madison, TN*

GAMBIT
Adrian Puente
Chicago Hts., IL

THE THING
James M. Gill, *Carrolltown, PA*

SINISTER
Chris Allo
Brooklyn, NY

PRE-TEEN TITANS

"We're just like superheroes, only smaller. That, and we need help using a toilet." Special tip of the hat to these super-powered tykes who really look cool. These li'l guys each win a bonus prize of the new *Teen Titans* #1 signed by Dan Jurgens.

MARY MARVEL
Elena Garcia
Brooklyn, NY

SCARLET WITCH
Gina Logan
Jackson, NJ

Jason Senior, *Weedville, PA*

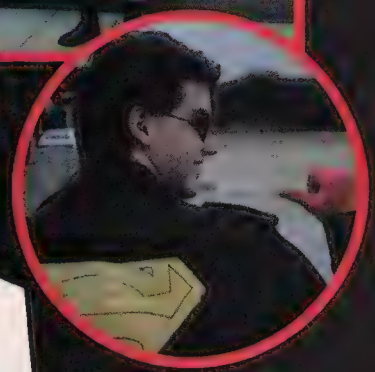
THE ATOM
J.R. McCartney
Millersville, MD

SUPERGIRL
Jessica Monroe
Santa Clarita, CA

BAT-MITE
Brandon Collins
Loyall, KY

XENA
Mai Podhajski
Midwest City, OK

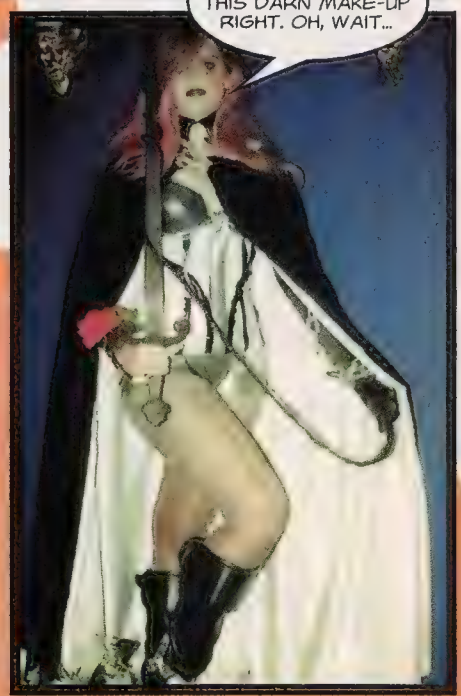
SPAWN
Brett Musil
(costume by Samuel B. Rapien)
Grand Island, NE



SUPERBOY
Sean Bray
Seekonk, MA

Matt Fardellone, *Smithtown, NY*

Terry Lohmeyer, *Ridgley, MD*



Dawn Taflinger
San Antonio, TX

AVENGELYNE
Bliss M. Beals, *Tacoma, WA*

BRIAN PARSLEY'S PARADE OF STARS

Maybe Brian Parsley's chicken. That'd explain why he never appeared in any of them costumes he made. Still, the costumes he made were so freakin' cool he deserves a li'l something extra. So on top of the prizes these suits already won, Brian takes home a *Kingdom Come* card set, with the first card autographed by Mark Waid and Alex Ross.

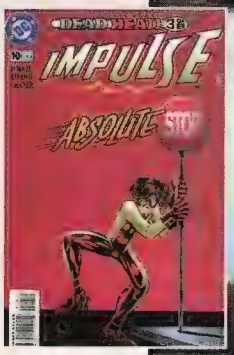
BATGIRL ***Jennifer Jordan***
Costume by Brian Parsley

SPIDER-MAN
Hiram A. Smith
(who wrote, "Ben Reilly...ugh! Bad idea, cool costume design.")
Brooklyn, NY

SCARECROW
Lance E. Coulter
Burton, SC

DAREDEVIL ***Jeff Sealy***
Costume by Brian Parsley

AMERICAN MAID
Shawn Harris
Costume by Brian Parsley



IMPULSE
Ryan Purvis, *Strongsville, OH*

ARON FLUX
Dayna Rinks
Costume by Brian Parsley & Arnie Owens

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN
Martin Cuellar
Austin, TX

All-painted art featuring BORIS VALLEJO, JULIE BELL, JOE JUSKO, KEN KELLY and MARK TEXEIRA!
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SPACE GHOST & BLUE FALCON
Jef Johnson & Richard McCaslin
Houston, TX

TUSKEN RAIDER
Sam Thompson, Des Moines, IA

STAR WARRIORS C-3PO: Brian Foreman, Princess Leia: Leah Hahn, Han Solo: Brian Gulizia, Chewie: Ken Seals, Obi-Wan: Frank Logan, R2-D2: Soulless prop, Luke Skywalker: Rob Hawkins

SWAYED BY THE FORCE
The most popular costume theme this year? Star Wars. The most popular costume? Boba Fett. But hey, alla these Star Wars groupies look keen. So keen in fact, they each win a bonus prize of *The Black Pearl* #1, signed by Mark Hamill.

DR. STRANGE & ROGUE
Sergio Severi & Marzia Veneri
Arezzo, Italy

BOBA FETT
John Green
Freeport, NY

SPIDER WOMAN I & II
Tina Bieber & Suzanne Forni
Valley Stream, NY

BIKER SCOUTS
All: Jery Lee
La Verne, CA

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OCTOBER 25,26,27

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STEVE DILLON
co-creator of preacher

DAN JURGENS
writer/artist Teen Tians, Superman

FEATURING
LEGENDARY ARTIST
BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

ADAM "WOLVERINE *ARTIST*" KUBERT
ANDY "X-MEN *ARTIST*" KUBERT
MARK "FLASH, IMPULSE *WRITER*" WAID

JUST ADDED!!!
TONY "STARMAN *ARTIST*" HARRIS
JEPH "BATMAN:THE LONG HALLOWEEN" LOEB
HOWARD "JLA *ARTIST*" PORTER
JOE "SUPERMAN *ARTIST*" RUBINSTEIN
TIM "BATMAN:THE LONG HALLOWEEN" SALE

PLUS...

BOB ALMOND
AMANDA CONNER
GEOF DARROW
CHUCK DIXON
GARY GIANNI
DAVE GIBBONS
FLINT HENRY
JOE JUSKO
JIM KRUEGER
HARRY LAMPERT
DAVID MACK
MARIANO
MIKE MIGNOLA
FABIAN NICIEZA
MICHAEL AVON OEMING
PETER PALMIOTTI
JULIE SCHWARTZ
MIKE SELLERS
MIKE WIERINGO
AND MANY MORE!

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CHRISTINA Z
MIKE TURNER
D-TRON
JONATHAN D. SMITH
The whole Witchblade team!!!

SPECIAL GUESTS

JOE QUESADA
JIMMY PALMIOTTI
co-creators/writers/artists of Ash
HUMBERTO RAMOS
artists of Ash/22 Brides
DAVE ROSS
creator/writer/artist of Thrax

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GRAND PRIZE WINNER

WONDER WOMAN

Rebecca Avello
Hollywood, FL

Tough competition this year, and while Aeon Flux, Impulse and the Space Ghost/Blue Falcon combo were all in the running, Rebecca and her Wonder Woman outfit stole the show.

"Wonder Woman's just my favorite superhero," she says. "I remember watching the TV show when I was really little, and I started collecting her books when Deodato drew them a few years ago."

As for the costume itself, it took Rebecca nearly a year to do. "It's all hand sewn because I don't have a sewing machine. The costume itself is all spandex. The stars on the bottom are all appliqués that I sewed on. The bracelets were made of pvc pipe that I painted, sawed in half and hinged together so they'd really snap on my wrists. It was so hard to find red boots at thrift stores. The only pair I could find were $75 high heels at a department store, but I bought 'em anyway and put white vinyl tape over the top and front. The lasso is just a gold rope that actually hooks onto my belt."

She shot this scene at a park near her house. "We tried to go when it wasn't too crowded. It was kind of a busy park and I got a lot of cat calls. But it got fun after a while. I got used to it and got into the character."

As for next year, Rebecca's already begun work on a Scarlet Witch costume. And if it's as good as her Wonder Woman, you other costume makers better get crackin' on your entries!

So...who determines which pictures get printed and who wins? That be us, the *Wizard* Staff. After all the entries are opened and the cream of the crop (about several hundred or so) are determined, we spread the photos all over the floor, snack on Doritos and warm soda and laugh ourselves silly. When we're done whittling away the "keen but not the keenest" entries, we're left with those that either had amazing costumes, incorporated cool settings or just made us pee our pants with laughter. Once we've got those, we go through the agonizing process of choosing the Grand Prize Winner (based on overall coolness—costume, setting, props, etc.). After that, we slap 'em on a page, degrade the contestants with third-grade bathroom humor and, in the quiet moments when the work's all done, think about how great it is to have fans as cool as you guys. Without you, none of this, none of *Wizard*, would be possible.

Thanks for taking part in the craziness, and we'll see you again next year.

The *Wizard* Staff, when not serving jail time for the "incident" with Peppy the Superstick monkey, enjoys hanging around third-grade bathrooms for its material.

IF YOU CAN'T MEET THE WITCHBLADE TEAM IN PERSON WE'LL SEND THEM TO YOUR DOOR

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This Dynamic Forces Exclusive variant issue features the crossover between The Darkness and Witchblade which leads into "The Darkness" #1 and an all new, Mike Turner & D-Tron cover not available anywhere else!
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Signed version by writer David Wohl & Christina Z, artists Mike Turner & D-Tron with "THE DARKNESS" creator Marc Silvestri and inker Batt.
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WITCHBLADE #9
Signed by writers David Wohl & Christina Z & artist Kevin (Spawn) Conrad with Jonathon D. Smith.
NOTE: Kevin Conrad is donating his signature fee to The Humane Society of The United States in memory of friend and neighbor Donald Stafford! Dynamic Forces, Inc. & Top Cow Productions are matching Kevin Conrad's contribution!
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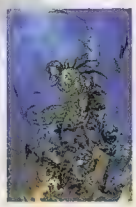

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Signed by artists Brandon Peterson & Batt.
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035701S

BACK ISSUE BONANZA
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Copy this page and (so you don't cut up your comic!) list the item(s) you're interested in with the code number. Total it up (please refer to shipping prices). Place a check or write down Visa or Mastercard number, and in 2-4 weeks (3 days if using express shipping) everything you ordered will magically appear on your doorstep (or treehouse, or wherever you may live). And if you don't want to bother with any of that...just call!

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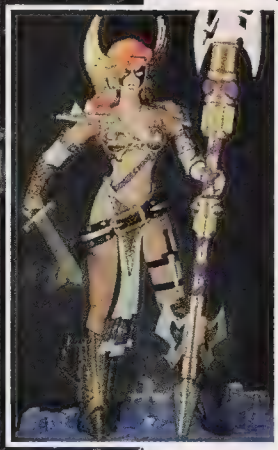
Dress Rehearsal

HOW TO CREATE YOUR VERY OWN COOL HALLOWEEN COSTUME

By Anastasia Michele Heonis
Photos by John Grieshop

So Halloween is creeping up on you again, and you haven't a thing to wear. Out of desperation, creativity is born. (So is frustration, but we won't get into that.) You've always wanted to create that wickedly awesome costume and I'm here to show you how.

You might know me as the ex-official Razor model or you saw me as Lady Rawhide *and* Rogue (in the Grand Prize group shot) in last year's *Wizard* Halloween Costume Contest. Truth be known, I entered three times under three different names and placed twice. Along with the help of 3-D genius, Devin Night, we brought Razor to life, complete with razor blades. Presently, Devin and myself own Immortal Nights Studio and produce the comic *DreamCrashers* (subtle plug).



Besides throwing all I have into writing, I love creating costumes so incredible they make people's jaws drop. Sometimes I succeed, and sometimes I'm not so lucky. But hopefully I can give *you* a few tips on how to make an incredible costume yourself.

First thing you have to do is pick a costume. Choose one you think you'll enjoy doing and at a level of difficulty you feel comfortable with. Some costumes are more involved than others, so factor in how much time and effort you want to put in to this. As you progress, you'll learn what works and what doesn't, and that's the single most important thing I can tell you. Your own experience will help you the most.

My costume this year? Todd McFarlane's Angela. So without further delay, Devin and I will show you the steps it took to create our Angela costume.

GETTING STARTED

After you've chosen your costume, you'll want to gather the materials you think you'll need. Unless your costume is extremely simple, you probably won't get all your materials on the first trip. In fact, it'll take several trips because as you begin to fit the pieces together, you'll find yourself needing things you never even thought about. You can find most of the materials at your local art supply, craft, fabric and hardware stores. To give you an idea of what tools and supplies we used to make Angela, here's a brief rundown of the tools and supplies we used:

1 **Aluminum siding** • *This roll of aluminum was used in making Angela's big boot*
2 **Wire Cutters** • *The only way you're gonna cut the aluminum siding (Note: do NOT use regular scissors as you'll just end up ruining them)*
3 **Wire** • *Used mostly to give life to Angela's ribbon*
4 **Gold Chain** • *We got two sizes, and found the larger chain was more appropriate for the chain mail on Angela's sleeve.*
5 **Hacksaw** • *Something's gotta cut through those gold chains*
6 **Metal Strips** • *Originally planned for the bottom part of the purple boot, but they didn't work right so we scrapped 'em*
7 **White Foam** • *Protects my leg and helps keep the big boot in place*
8 **Strapless Bra** • *The bustier was built on top of this*
9 **Ribbon** • *Decoration for Angela's sword*
10 **Acrylic Paint** • *Used to paint all sorts of parts on Angela's costume*
11 **Ruler** • *You'll definitely need a common ruler to measure different pieces of the costume*
12 **Heavy Razor Blade** • *Cuts the styrene and foam core*
13 **Pop Rivets** • *Keep the boot and headdress together*

Now, one of the most important things to get is reference materials. You'll find that there can be many subtle (and not so subtle) variations of the costume you want to do. Find one you like and pay attention to detail, because in the end, it will really put your creation a step above everyone else's. When we dug up all our references on Angela, every picture had something different. Since we had the 13-inch Angela figure, we felt that was one of the most recognizable versions of her costume.

So now that you have all your materials, pick a part of the costume to start with and get rolling!

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Not everyone out there's gonna want to make an Angela costume, I take it (although some of you guys would look pretty funny in one!). So here's a quick list of some basic tools every costume maker should have on hand, no matter what costume you're making.

Hot Glue Gun • Relatively inexpensive, it is a literal lifesaver. Use for long-term fixation or a quick fix. Works on just about everything: fabric, leather, foam core, styrene, etc. Glue sticks are very cheap and now they come in fashion colors!

Dremel • Used for drilling holes into things such as styrene and metal. If you're planning to do a lot of armor-type stuff, you'll need this.

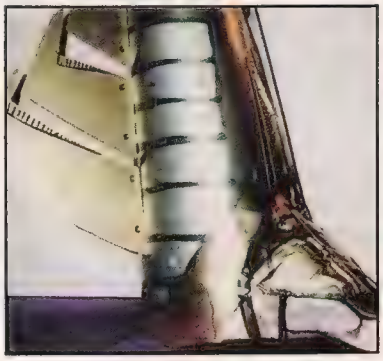
Pop Rivet • The essential tool for making anything that cannot be sewed or glued on, such as riveting styrene to leather. This is another must-have if you plan to work with a lot of metal or styrene.

Hobby Knife or X-Acto Knife • Just something that will help you cut an even line, while giving you plenty of flexibility to cut delicate curves.

Don't forget the obvious: Needles, thread, scissors, measuring tape, straight pins and a seam ripper. A sewing machine is quite helpful, but if you don't have one you can always hand sew things—it just takes more time. I don't recommend working with leather, suede or vinyl until you have a basic understanding of working with fabric. These thicker fabrics can be quite expensive, so if you mess up, it can cost you considerably more than a yard or so of fabric. The tools you use for working with leather, suede and vinyl cost a lot as well, so unless you're *positive* that this is something you want to do a lot, don't invest the money into it. ■ *AMH*

BIG BOOT

We started with Angela's big boot, which admittedly was one of the toughest parts. Devin cut a rough rectangle out of aluminum flashing about two feet tall by three feet wide. Then we fitted it around my leg, holding it at the top to get the correct fit. After riveting the two ends together, letting the bottom flare out a little, we added a third rivet halfway down the boot. Using styrene (a plastic flexible styrofoam) and duct tape, Devin created the front protruding foot. We then added foam around the inside top of the foot part to secure it to my own foot. It was then painted gold, masking off the silver areas, while black paint was added to help enhance the end product. The three spiky projections on the side of the boot were made of foam core paper that was painted and glued onto the boot with the glue gun. I slipped my foot into the top and then Devin assisted in putting on my high heeled boot (bought dirt cheap at a thrift store) through the hollow bottom of Angela's boot and then slid a piece of round foam around my ankle. The ankle foam keeps the outer boot from moving around and is basically a "false bottom" for Angela's big boot.



PURPLE BOOT

The second boot, the purple form-fitting one, was built on top of an old pair of boots I bought at the thrift store for $2. I studied the seamlines and made a pattern out of newspaper. It's easier than it sounds. You just have to imagine what everything would look like completely flat and spread out. Then you draw the basic shape onto newspaper, cut it out, place it on your fabric and cut!

For this particular boot, I needed to leave extra fabric at the top in order to make the knee armor. Remember, there should be a separate piece of fabric to cover the toe in order to give it a smoother look. I chose purple spandex to cover the boot since spandex is the wonder fabric—it has great stretch, durability and can be used for a variety of different costumes. After I cut my pattern out, I laid it on top of the boot until I found exactly how and where I wanted to place it. You have the option of hand sewing fabric to the boot or using a hot glue gun. I used the glue gun. I recommend gluing the toe piece down first and then the calf section. And after you've glued pieces down, you may have to trim off some raw edges.

NOTE: If the boots have a zipper, like ours did, be sure to cut an opening in the fabric for the zipper. Just glue the edges right next to the zipper.

PURPLE BOOT'S HEEL

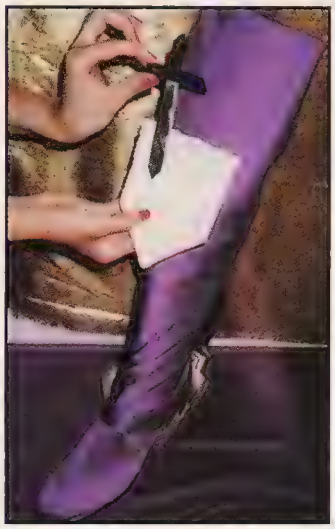
For the chunky gold heel of the boot, we divided it into three sections. The back of the heel was two pieces of foam core—one nailed right onto the heel. (Most heels will need a drill to make a hole, so please use caution.) This gave added support and covered the back of the actual heel. Then we made a knife sheath and glued it to the first piece of foam core. The knife in the heel is a fake made of resin that was then painted.

The two side pieces were made from four strips of foam core each. Each strip was mounted onto each other to resemble a "staircase" look and then glued and painted gold. Once the paint dried, the end pieces were then glued onto the side of the heel.

For added support and durability, the arch of the boot was then filled in with foam sealant (available at any hardware store), and left to dry overnight. We placed a piece of foam core on top of the sealant before it dried to keep it even, since the sealant does expand a little. After it dried, we covered the two remaining gaps of the heel with two pieces of painted foam core. Then we filled in as much empty space between the foam core (at the back of the heel) and the bottom seam of the boot with glue to aid in securing it.

KNEE ARMOR

Using the excess fabric at the top of the boot, you want to form a pocket with the open side facing down. Taking a square piece of styrene, cut to fit inside the pocket, rivet the styrene to the boot, and then slip the pocket over the styrene. You'll need to drill a hole through the styrene and punch a hole through the leather. We used a leather punch, but a good pair of scissors should do the trick, just be careful. You'll also need a pop rivet gun to fasten (what else?) the pop rivets. Be mindful of sharp edges—you might have to add some padding to the inside of the boot to guard against the styrene. We made the knee "armor" out of foam core, used bathtub caulking for the raised trim, painted the whole thing and then riveted it to the styrene.



The final touch to the boot was the black strap that wraps around it. I made this out of black spandex attached with sticky-back velcro.

THE LOIN CLOTH

For the white "loin cloth" (for lack of a better word), again I chose spandex. Pay attention to how the fabric lays, as that will influence how you cut it. As mentioned before, imagine how everything would look spread out and flat. Measure the center of the loin cloth, from just below your navel to just past the knees. This will serve as your middle seam. You're going to want to fold your fabric, just like when you used to make paper hearts, so it's symmetrical. Folding a newspaper in half, mark off the length you desire and work out from the middle seam. When creating an original

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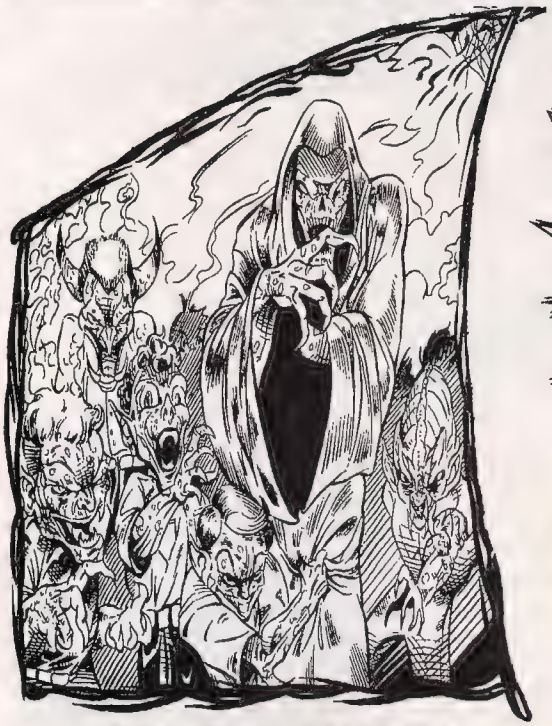

MONSTERS!

BULLIES!

AND MORE MONSTERS!

Story by D. Miles
Art by Keu Cha
Cover by Dan Fraga
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Jeromy Cox

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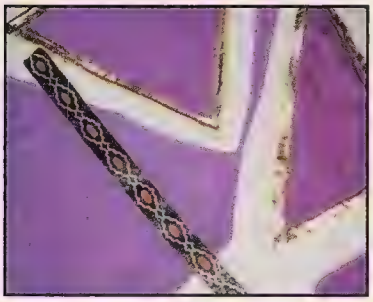
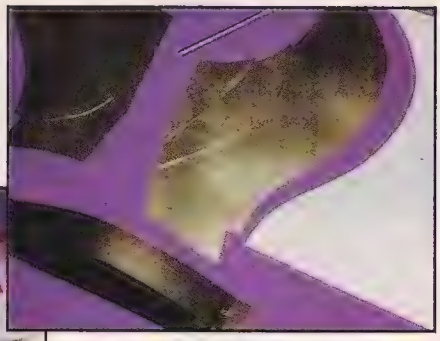
work, you have to guess sometimes. Draw out the basic shape, pin the fabric (which, as I said, should be folded like the newspaper) and cut.

There is a purple inset on the loin cloth with gold trim. I basically just cut out a purple triangle with an angled dip at the top, sewed gold around the edges and then carefully pinned it to the center of the loin cloth. After I was sure where I wanted it, I sewed it on. The same goes for the back piece as well. The two are connected by a snap (which isn't much to hold two pieces of fabric together, considering how skimpy this thing is).



THE HEADDRESS

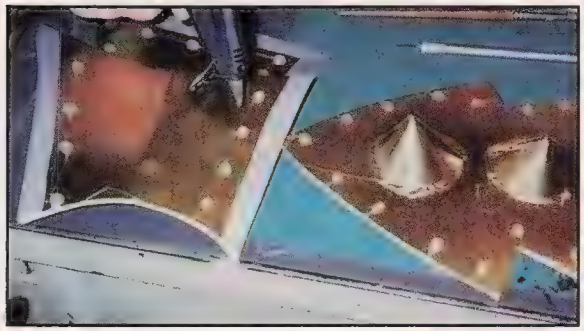
For the headdress, we cut a strip of styrene that was measured against my head for the front piece, and then took each end of the strip and bent it slightly outward. This is where the "wing" parts would later be attached. Than we took a thick piece of elastic that would be sturdy enough to hold the headdress in place, but thin enough to hide under the hair. We riveted the elastic to each side of the styrene creating a circle that fit snugly on my head. The "wing" section was cut from styrene and painted gold, using black paint to bring out the detail of the feathers.



The "Spawn medals" are just painted circular pieces of foam core. And the two silver pieces that attach to the "wings" nearest the face were made with styrene and glued in place.

ARMOR

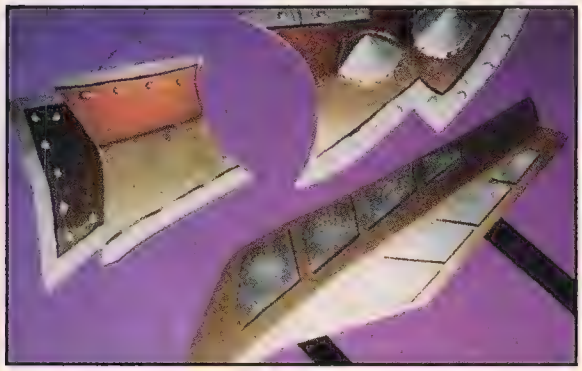
The armor was all made from, yes, the wonder material—foam core, and then painted gold and silver. For the arm piece, we cut the shape we wanted and painted it gold. Since the inset was raised silver, we cut out separate cone shapes for it made of styrene, painted 'em silver and then glued them to the top. I also used little dabs from the glue gun and, after they dried, painted them silver to look like rivets in the armor.



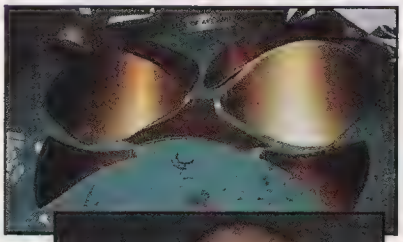
Then we took two pieces of elastic to use as arm bands and secured them with velcro. The buckles are purely decoration. The armor attaches to the arm bands with sticky-back velcro, which makes for easy removal.

We did the same for the shoulder pieces, though I don't recommend gluing, stapling, sewing or nailing pieces of a costume into your precious flesh just to acquire "the look." As far as I know, though, sticky-back velcro doesn't injure you. So yes, that's the secret to how those shoulder pieces manage to stay on me without any obvious support.

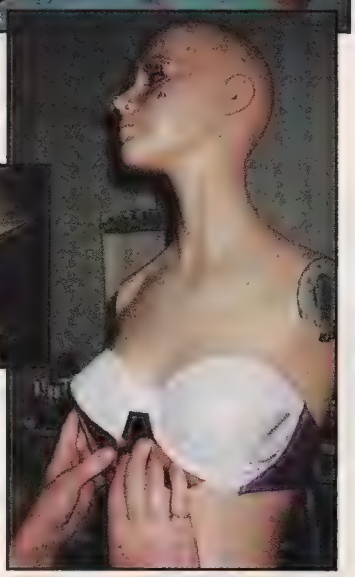
The chain mail piece on her arm is simply chain that was cut and laced together. And the two handless gloves are just two sewn sleeves of white fabric.



BUSTIER



Using a S7 strapless bra from K-Mart as the foundation (Did you think I went to Victoria's Secret and spent a fortune?), I took the bra and sewed purple fabric on the part that would be exposed: the band around the chest. Devin then placed the bra on one of our mannequins (always handy to have around!) and traced onto the styrene, pieces that matched the bra's seamlines. Unfortunately, there's no easy surefire way to do this, so just keep practicing till it works. While looking at the bra, Devin, freehand on styrene, proceeded to cut them out; we ended up with a total of eight pieces. It's wise to mark the inside of them so you know where everything goes. No matter how good you are at the memory game, you'd be surprised what you can forget when you've been up for 24 hours, intravenously feeding caffeine into your blood while putting a costume together. After the pieces were marked, we spray painted them gold and waited for 'em to dry. Devin first hot glued the lower upside down "u"-shaped piece to the lower part of the bra. Then he built upwards to form the cups, which had two pieces each, carefully placing where each piece would go and then hot gluing them directly to the bra. The circular projection in the middle is just a cut ketchup container you can get at fast food joints that still use those small plastic cups. Then we painted it and glued it to the center. After all the pieces were in place, Devin used bathtub caulking to add the detailed raised portion on the bustier. After it dried overnight, he painted it silver along with the circular projection in the middle.



AND YOU THOUGHT DENNIS WAS A MENACE

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ACCESSORIES

Details…this is where it counts. The sword sheath was made completely out of foam core which was painted gold and black, and glued together. Finding weapons for costumes can be difficult and expensive, and unless you're a blacksmith, making them is out of the question (unless you want to carve them out of wood or styrene). For the spear, we took an oak pole covered in silver duct tape (the very one we used for Gambit in last year's contest) and carved the spear head and other protrusions out of foam core, which were painted silver and glued to the pole. I'll admit that the sword we used was pretty easy to come by—I just walked into the house and chose which one I liked best. Devin is a bit of an ancient weapons fanatic.

The belt was another thrift store find (99 cents). I masked off what I wanted to stay black with tape and paper, and painted the rest silver. After it dried, I went in with a gold metallic paint pen and added the gold "studs," as well as painted the buckle gold. The belt was then cut in half and each end was glued to opposite ends of the sword sheath.

One of the most important details of the Angela costume, I thought, was her ribbons. So I searched until I came across some purple-and-gold embroidered ribbon at a fabric store. The gold trim outlined purple ovals, perfect for painting red dots in the middle with fabric paint. So for a night, I sat down with ribbon strewn from here to Bangkok, patiently painting red dots on it and fighting my cats for ownership of the ribbon.

The final touch? I sewed thin florist wire into the ribbon to give it a "life" of its own.

HAIR

The final steps are getting your hair and make-up like the character's. Just because you have short blond hair and the character has an Elvis do, doesn't mean it won't happen. That's what wigs are for. Unfortunately, wigs are not cheap. Human hair is the most expensive, followed by synthetic and hair extensions. If you already have the right length of hair, you could always dye it or use temporary spray-in color. But I prefer wigs. And since I have a lot of them, I can usually find what I need in my collection. You can, however, find inexpensive wigs that don't look cheap. Halloween shops are famous for carrying the cheesiest wigs, but occasionally you can find a decent one. Problem with those shops are that they're seasonal. So try a costume shop where you can find a good wig you can work with for about $30.

What do I mean by "work with"? Well, drag out the hair spray and brush, and have fun. Yes, you *can* create just about any style with hair spray and your imagination—from Dawn's wavy do that covers one eye to Aeon Flux's dramatic bob. (A little wire will do the trick for Flux's do.) Guys, don't shy away…you too can wear wigs! (I can hear your protests already.)

MAKE-UP

Not all costumes require such dramatic make-up as Angela's. For her make-up, I used Mehron's (the first name in theatrical make-up) black face paint around the eyes. To get Angela's sharp black edges, use a paint brush. You can also buy regular face paint (if you can't find or afford theatrical make-up) that will work just as well. And if you want to get Angela's "white eyes," simply cover your eyelids with white face paint and close your eyes for the pictures. (If you look at the X-Men picture from *Wizard #52*, that's what we did for Nightcrawler's eyes.)

So that's all there is to it and you're now ready for war! (Though I cannot, with a good conscience, recommend you *really* go to war in this costume.)

Now don't think of these steps like the 10 Commandments, just use them as helpful hints and steps in a process that *you* create as you go along. Once you begin to work things out for yourself, you'll see what works for you. Just because something doesn't work out right the first time, don't give up. Your two most important tools are determination and imagination. Good luck and Happy Halloween! W

Anastasia Michele Heonis is currently thinking about next year's Halloween costume. Got any ideas?

Ta-daa! Here I am in full Angela regalia!

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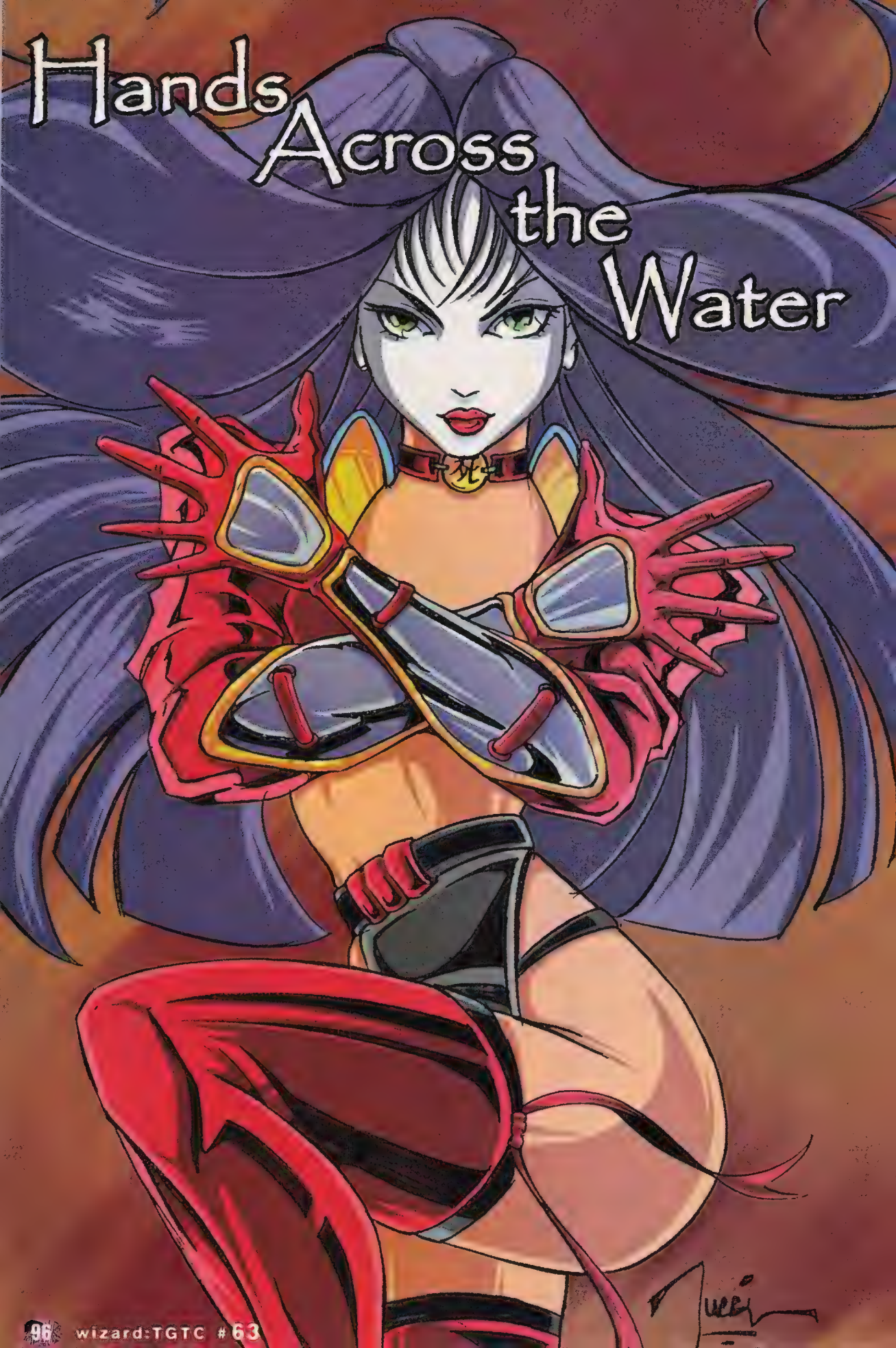
Hands Across the Water



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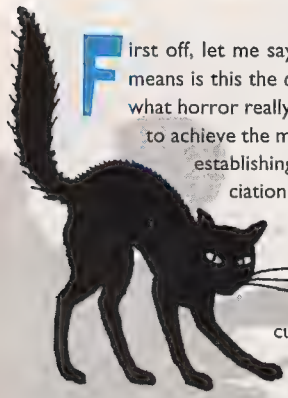
Trick or Treat at Castle Doom
by Brian Von Douglas Ahern
WITLESS STRIPLINGS! THERE WILL BE NO SOAPING WINDOWS OR SMASHING PUMPKINS THIS YEAR!
MOVE FORWARD TO -- ACCEPT YOUR TREAT -- OR BE VAPORIZED.
BOO

UPON ORDER OF DOOM, ALL LATVERIAN YOUTHS WILL ENTER MY ANCESTRAL HOME AND BE PROPERLY AMUSED AS BEFITS THE SEASON! WITH SUCH DIVERTING GAMES AS--
"TRY TO DESTROY THE VON DOOM FAMILY HEIRLOOM CHEST."
OR BOB FOR APPLES IN KRISTOFF'S BRAIN-WASHING TUB!
OBOY! APPLES!
GLUB!
I AM THE REAL DOOM!
NO, I AM!!
OR MAYHAP THE MISERABLE PUPS WOULD PREFER A VISIT TO THE OCCULT ROOM--AND ATTEMPT TO RESURRECT THE SPIRIT OF A FAVORITE DAMNED RELATIVE!
FESTIVE HALLOWEEN GARB IS PROVIDED BY HANDY TIBETAN MONKS!
EACH INSOLENT WHELP CAN TEST HIS ARROGANCE WITH THE "CAN YOU WITHSTAND ABSORBING THE STOLEN POWER OF THE SILVER SURFER" GAME!
MY INCOMPARABLE TIME MACHINE SHALL EVEN BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATELY SPOOKY RIDES THROUGH HISTORY!
WELCOME BACK FROM--THE SPANISH INQUISITION.
AND AT MIDNIGHT IN THE DUNGEON-- THE GRAND UNMASKING!
EEEEY-YEEUUW!!
Doctor Doom's HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS
ALWAYS WEAR DARK COLORS FOR SKULKING IN SHADOWS.
CARRY AN INHIBITOR RAY WHEN IN STRANGE NEIGHBORHOODS.
SHOULD ANYONE REFUSE TO GIVE YOU A TREAT, STRIKE A DRAMATIC POSE AND SHOUT, "YOU DARE SPEAK THUS TO ME, IMPUDENT SPECK?!"
-BRIAN

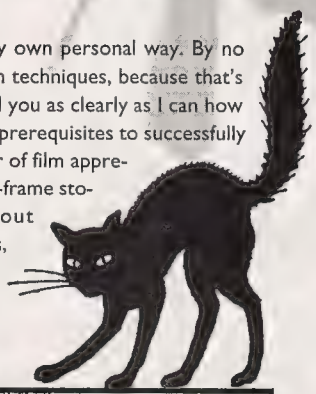
Basic Training

this month's host: Kelley Jones

How to Set an Eerie Mood



First off, let me say that this little ditty on how to draw horror is simply my own personal way. By no means is this the *only* way. In this column, I'll be emphasizing ideas more than techniques, because that's what horror really is. It's all one big mind game. Don't worry, though—I'll tell you as clearly as I can how to achieve the maximum impact of these ideas in your drawings. As for any prerequisites to successfully establishing mood in your pieces, I highly recommend taking a number of film appreciation courses. Films and comics are very similar in their frame-to-frame storytelling. These courses will not only teach you about foreshadowing, foreground and other technical aspects, but they'll teach you how to really look at your work. Okay, that's my little pep talk—now dim the lights and cue the spooky music, as you enter the world of horror!



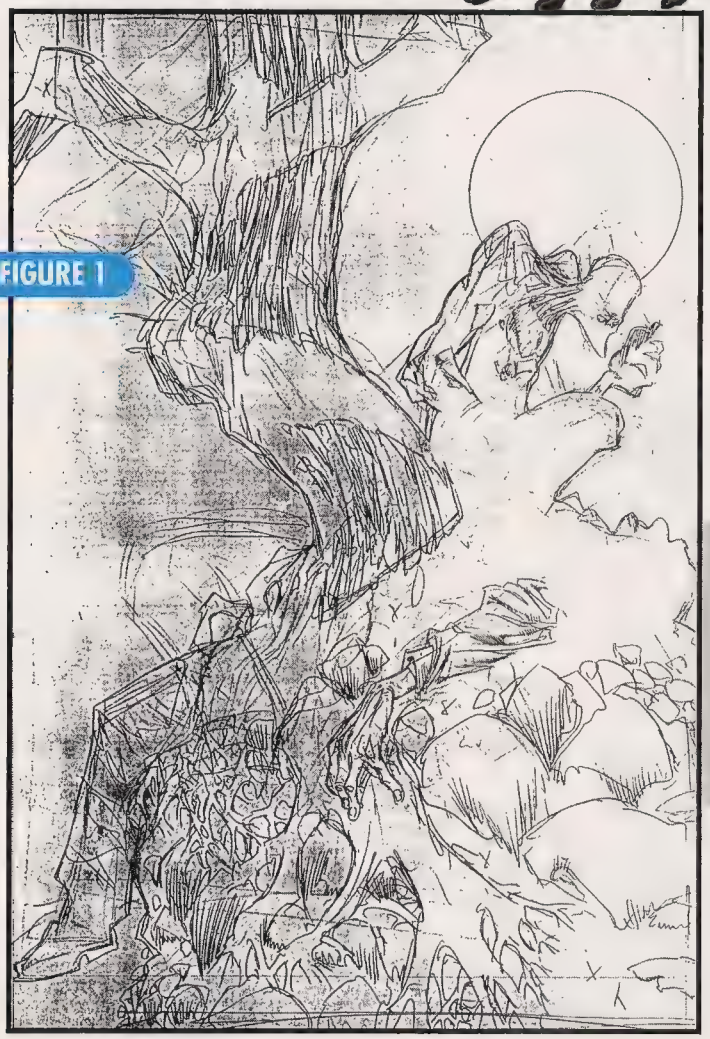


FIGURE 1

Dark Storytelling

To begin, I loosely sketch out my ideas with a soft blue watercolor pencil. In this example, I haven't erased the unnecessary lines, because I want you to see the construction, and the choices I made towards completion.

Now, a horror picture should suggest a story in order to properly attract its viewer. Silhouettes and strong lighting help me guide the viewer to look at the parts of the picture that will do this.

I find that the best results are achieved when I look at something and ask either "What happened?" or "What *will* happen?" Here in this picture, I'm trying to cause revulsion at what occured as well as tension for what will soon follow.

FIGURE 2

I Ink, Therefore I am

Inking this, I only used a No. 3 watercolor brush. You should try inking without worrying too much about any goofs. Staying loose will help you make fewer errors. The stiffer you are, and the more you worry about mistakes, the more likely you are to make those mistakes. So attack the pencils and feel free to move the paper around. This lets you "see" the build-up of the line and decide where to place the black areas.

To make the picture atmospheric, I'll use different textures. This helps make the rock look different from the tree, the clothing different from skin. To do this, I use shorter, thinner strokes on the tree bark, and longer, more rounded strokes on the stones. On the shadow, I try and keep the edges clean so the viewer can tell what the object is.

Moon Over Mine Enemy

To emphasize the goblin and add more atmosphere, I added the moon. Rather than draw it, I placed a sheet of tracing paper over the entire picture and taped it into place. I then cut away everywhere the sky was. To achieve the air brush effect, I used an old toothbrush and applied the ink to the toothbrush with the watercolor brush. About two or three dips on it should do. Then I pulled back on the bristles with my thumb and let 'em snap back. Do this a few inches away from where you want the spray effect, and feel free to do it a few times in areas you want darker. To make the moon appear brighter, I didn't outline it in ink. This makes it recede into the background and frame the goblin, as well as make the shadows darker.

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4

Get the White Out

The final stage is where you want to use white-out. Not only can it clean up your mistakes, but white-out can actually add to your drawing. Notice how the rocks are more rounded out and the roots extend more deeply into the black.

And that's it. See how horror isn't just blood and gore? Through lighting and silhouettes, I can suggest the action. This, to me, is much more effective, because the viewer can use his imagination to fill in the nasty bits better than I could draw them.

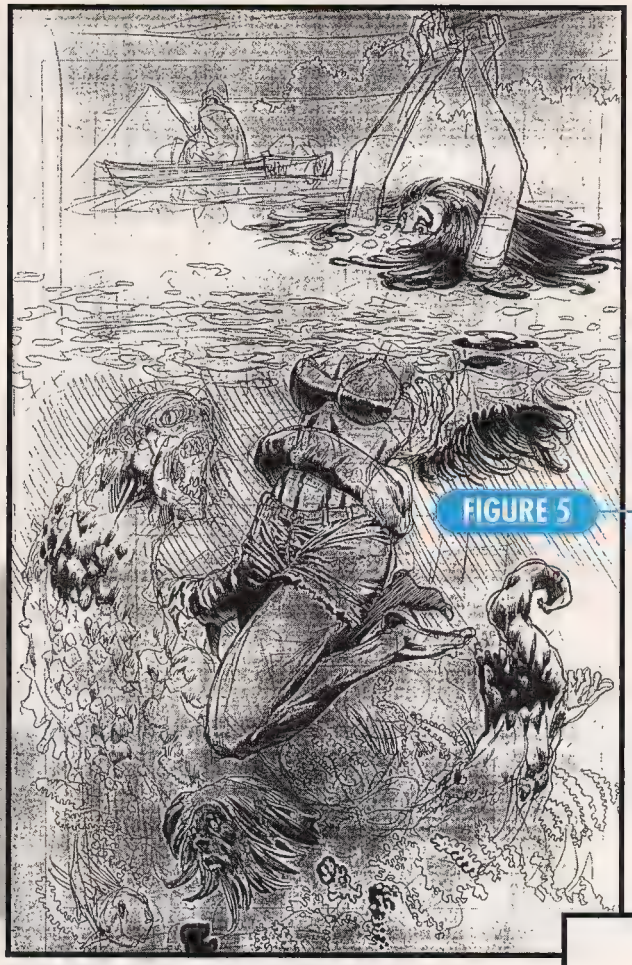


FIGURE 5

Confidence Drawing

In this sketch, I only partially inked the areas that I'm drawing. You don't always have to pencil every detail if you are going to ink it. This helps to add vitality to the drawing as well as give you confidence in your skills. I also find it fun to do because all kinds of "good" accidents can occur. For example, in this piece, the way the hair curls on top of the water wasn't in the pencils.

FIGURE 6

Remember to Brush First

All of this inking is done with a brush. This helps get across the current and buoyancy of the water. I always try to do my brush work first, because that keeps the drawing fresh and exciting.

On the monster, I emphasized its feet and hand by using as little rendering as possible; I barely outlined them. The monster itself will seem creepier with human appendages, and the decapitated head anchors the bottom of the picture while hinting at the girl's possible fate.

FIGURE 7

Inking to Crow About

All of the inking at this stage was done with a crowquill pen point. You can find them where calligraphy pens are housed at art stores. They're more flexible than a rapidograph pen (which is normally used for drawing straight-edged technical things like buildings and machines), so they take a little more time to learn how to use. They're good for things like the bubbles and wave outlines, because they keep a consistent line thickness. And on the lines leading up to the surface, the pen will "give" a little, so it blends together like a brush.

FIGURE 8

Two Treats in One

Using a little white-out on the surface waves and the decapitated head's hair helps to give some definition to both.

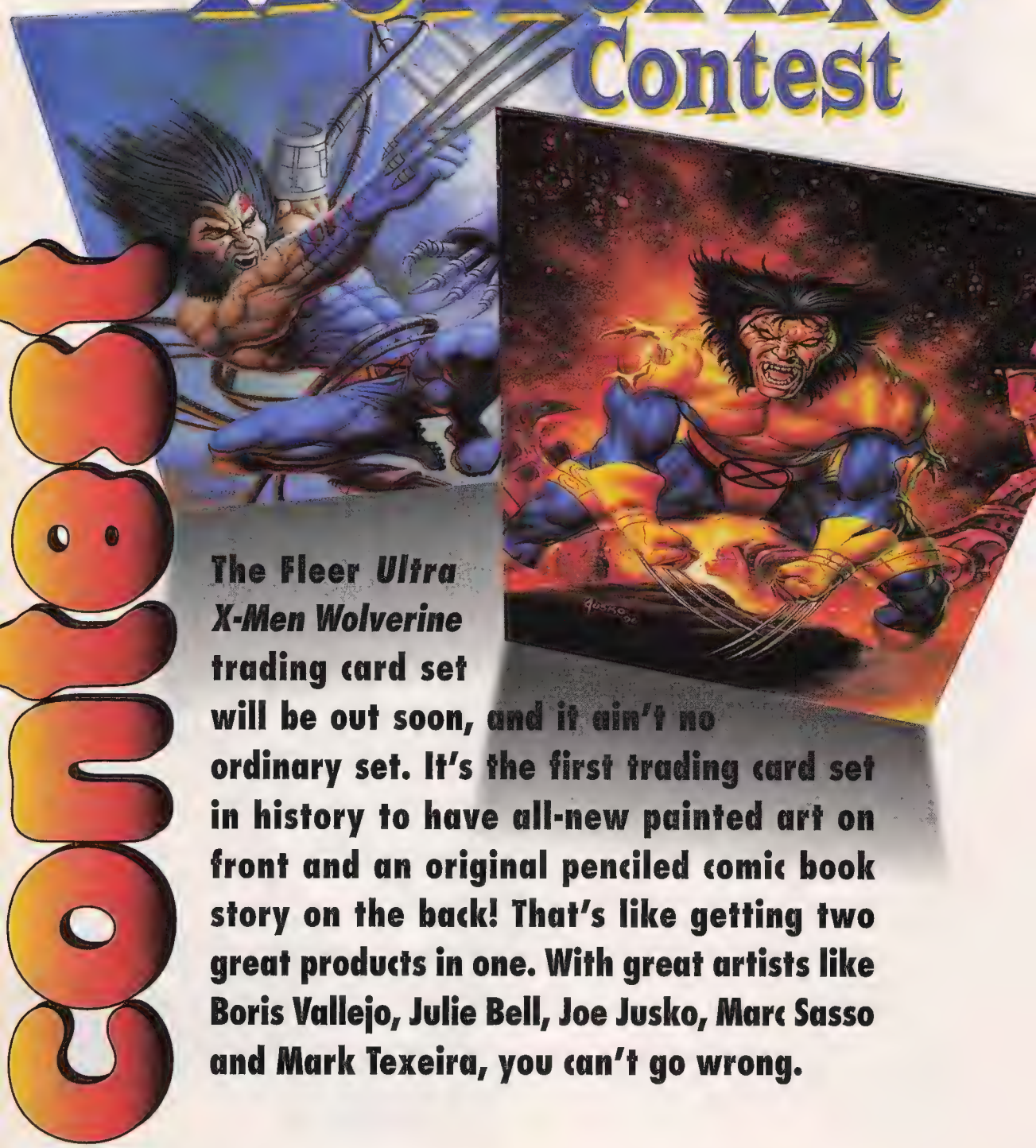
This drawing's main interest is that it's two pictures in one. If you cover the top of it and just view the underwater scene, it alone makes an interesting picture. Yet the scene above, with the girl's eyes, lets you know something's not right, even if you don't see why. And the fisherman not responding lets you know it's silent action, which is even spookier.

Well, hopefully this column has helped to (pardon me) get you in the mood. Anyway, the best advice I can give you is to discipline yourself to sit in a chair and just draw for hours a day. Once you accept the fact that your drawing won't be perfect, you can stop wasting time worrying about it. Also try drawing things you don't like, so you won't be afraid to draw them. When you get those things down, you'll find your time will be much more horribly productive.

Kelley Jones' enormously eared Batman renditions can be seen every month in DC Comics' Batman. *The best treat he ever got for Halloween was a 65-lb. wedge o' Hickory Smoked Jack cheese. Or was that the best trick?*

Fleer/SkyBox International Presents:

The Many Faces of Wolverine Contest



The Fleer *Ultra X-Men Wolverine* trading card set will be out soon, and it ain't no ordinary set. It's the first trading card set in history to have all-new painted art on front and an original penciled comic book story on the back! That's like getting two great products in one. With great artists like Boris Vallejo, Julie Bell, Joe Jusko, Marc Sasso and Mark Texeira, you can't go wrong.

How To Play

Wanna chance to get some? Okay. We know that you know Wolvie. But just how well do you know the many faces of Wolverine? Check out the five Wolverine images here and put them in their proper chronological order, based on which image of Wolvie appeared in comics first. F'r example, if you think Wolvie picture "B" came first, then that's number 1. If you think "D" came second, then that's number 2. You get it. Now do it right and win some…

…Great Prizes!

Grand Prize (1): One lucky winner will get the complete set of Fleer *Ultra X-Men Wolverine* trading cards! That's the 100 card basic set, the nine Marvel FX chase cards and the ultra-rare Wolverine Mirage card! And just 'cause we're feeling warm and fuzzy, we'll even kick in two Wolverine uncut sheets.

Second Prize (5): Five lucky winners will each get a complete set of Fleer *Ultra X-Men Wolverine* with chase cards. Homina homina homina!

Third Prize (10): Ten lucky winners will each get one box of Fleer *Ultra X-Men Wolverine* cards. Hoo-hah!

Fleer SkyBox®

This month's contest is sponsored by Fleer/SkyBox International, masters of the "snikt."

Fill this out, put it in an envelope and send it to: The Many Faces of Wolverine Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.
Deadline is November 29, 1996! So shuffle dem Wolvies!

The Many Faces of Legal Crap

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Fleer/SkyBox International and their immediate families or anyone who's name rhymes with Wolverine. That means you, Travaline! Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code, along with the answers, on the official entry form, a standard postcard or a 3-by-5-inch index card. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: The Many Faces of Wolverine Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. Wendigo. WEN-DI-GO! **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by November 29, 1996.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected by random drawing from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Drawing will take place on **December 16, 1996.**

For a list of winners, available after December 16, 1996, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: The Many Faces of Wolverine Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Many Faces of Wolverine Entry Form

DEADLINE IS NOV 29, 1996!

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Answers: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

JUNK DRAWER

Little bits of everything in the world of comic-related merchandise

by David Borak and the *Wizard* staff

Lobo Mask

WEAR ME, FANBOY!

The Don Post Studios premiered this fraggin' bad boy at the 1996 San Diego Comic Con. DC's badass bastich Lobo has been brought to life in latex just in time for Halloween! With a custom-made wig, this ultra cool latex mask comes equipped with separate armor and accessories to complete your Lobo ensemble. (Though ya' gotta supply your own hook and chain.) Pricing was unavailable at press time, pending final approval stages with Warner Bros., but keep an eye out for this one!

NO EVIL SHALL ESCAPE HIS LIGHT!

This statue doesn't even exist yet, but *you* could change that! Sighted at this year's San Diego Con was this gem from the gifted hands of sculptor Randy Bowen. Inspired by a 1994 speech from sci-fi guru Harlan Ellison praising the inspiration of GL co-creator Marty Nodell, Bowen sculpted Nodell's Golden Age Green Lantern as a gift for Nodell from Ellison. Only three copies of the statue were made—one for Nodell, one for Ellison and one for Bowen's own shelf. Like Ellison, Randy's a huge Golden Age DC fan and hopes to interest DC Comics in granting him a license to produce a line of Golden Age greats. So, if you think this is as slammin' as we do, write to Randy and tell him so at...

Bowen Designs
6803 SE Jack Road
Milwaukee, OR
97222

...and maybe we'll all have one of these someday!

A SCULPTURE TO SAI FOR

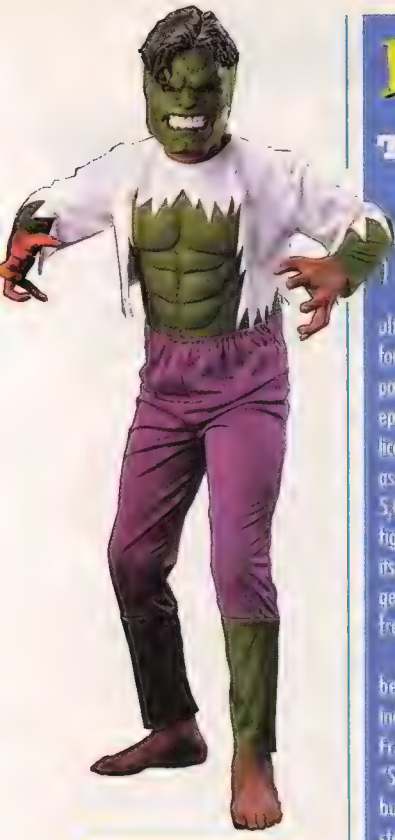
Available this October, Creative License presents the long-awaited Elektra sculpture for only $150. Sure to be on Matt Murdock's desk, the sculpture features the beautiful and deadly ninja dropping her kimono robe (to reveal her red costume, ya potty minds!) and standing ready with her two sai daggers (made from real metal). The cold-cast porcelain statue, sculpted by Alistair Coleman, is limited to only 2,500. Once this sculpture sells out, look for a limited-edition re-painted sculpture of Elektra in her rare white costume! Limited to a mere 250 pieces, that one will retail for $300.

Elektra Statue

MEN (AND WOMEN) IN TIGHTS

DC Comics presents a variety of new costumes due for release just in time for Halloween. Finally, freaks like us can find costumes in bigger sizes! Look for Batman from "Batman Forever," featuring a jumpsuit, chest piece, belt, cape and mask. From *Batman: The Animated Series,* there are full-body costumes of Batman and Robin. There's also a snazzy-cool replica of the Flash's costume, which includes a jumpsuit with attached boot tops, belt and a white-masked (???) hood. Superman's got a jumpsuit, boot tops, belt and that flowing red cape he's so famous for. Each costume sells for $45, except for the

Flash Costume



Hulk Costume

Flash, which is only $42.

And if you're lookin' to dress up as a superheroine, check out the Supergirl Costume or the Wonder Woman with Amazon headpiece costume for only $42 each. You can find most of these costumes in retail stores everywhere.

Product of the Month

THIS STATUE AIN'T NO FLUKE!

Just in time to whet the appetites of "X-Files" fans, Randy Bowen is gearing up for a whole statue series devoted to the ultra-popular Fox TV show. First up in the forthcoming X-Files Paranormal series of fully painted figurines is Flukeman from "The Host" episode. Bowen himself took some creative license to help make the blood-sucking mutant as frightening as possible. Limited to just 5,000 pieces, the 1/8-scale 10-inch cold-cast figurine requires no assembly and comes in its own full-color collector's box. With a suggested retail of $125, Flukeman will emerge from the sewers this December!

And if that isn't enough to pacify true-believers, future offerings in the series include Abducted Alien (from "Jose Chung's From Outer Space"), Eugene Tooms (from "Squeeze") and Parasitic Twin (from "Humbug"). *Wizard*'s just waiting for the Scully statue... yo-yo-yo yoooooom!

MINI-MARVEL MUTANTS

Marvel brings on its own superhero costumes and masks for the kiddies. The full-body costumes, available only in pre-teen sizes (ages 12-14), include Cyclops, Storm (with a big white wig), Wolverine, Hulk (with muscle chest padding!), Captain America (you've gotta make your own adamantium shield, though), and Spider-Man. Each costume has a suggested retail price of $34.99, except the Hulk, which is only $24.99 and Wolverine which goes for $38.99. Also, be on the lookout for a collection of vinyl masks in youth sizes. There's full-head masks of both Spidey and Wolverine for $8.99 each, and half-masks of Hulk and Beast for only $5.99 each. All of these masks and costumes will be available at retail stores everywhere in time for trick-or-treatin'.

Sandman Bookends

DREAM A LITTLE DREAM

Hey! We teased you last month with the Michael Zulli sketches for these puppies—now we got the real deal, so start saving your pennies! Sculpted by William Paquet (Swamp Thing, Dark Knight), these dreamy bookends feature both incarnations of Neil Gaiman's cult-favorite *Sandman*. In moody black, you'll find Morpheus himself, contemplating over a crystal ball while being watched over by Matthew the Raven. On the flipside, the current Dream, Daniel, has got his own crystal ball and a pair of sphinxes.

Evil Ernie Pewter

Scheduled to ship in December, these bookends'll retail at $275 and keep all your *Sandman* trade paperbacks neat and trim. *Beaucoup* cool from those wonderful statue people at DC Comics!

JEEZUM CROW!

With Vincent Perez blazing the big screen in the new "Crow: City of Angels," fans of the cult-fave James O'Barr comic character can add this nifty Crow vinyl model kit to their collections. Sculpted by John Dennett, this one retails for $49.50 and should currently be available at comic shops everywhere.

EVERY COFFIN HAS A SILVER LINING

From Chaos! Comics this October comes the Evil Ernie Commemorative Halloween Pewter featuring the Evil One and some furry friends in a coffin with a lid that opens and closes. Approximately 3 1/2 inches in length, the coffin, limited to 5,000 pieces, is sculpted by Clayburn Moore in 100% pewter and retails for $34.95 from the company "where darkness dwells!"

IN FLUX

Rising from the spiritual Armageddon of the Monican Republic, Aeon Flux is back! Now you can display the beautiful dominatrix/assassin in your home with the Aeon Flux sculpture by Legends in 3 Dimensions. This baby features Aeon in her tight leather outfit (hubba hubba!) looking ready for action. Sculpted by Greg Arnonowitz, the statue will be available in mid-October with a suggested retail price of $149.

Aeon Flux Statue

HEY! Are you a company producing some really nifty comic-related merchandise like Swamp Thing chia pets, Vlad the Impaler shish kabob skewers or Vampirella sun-screen? Well, if you do, we'd love to include 'em in our groovy "Junk Drawer" section. (Of course, we'd also like sculptures, novels, T-shirts, games, magnets, buttons, etc.) Please send all info and samples to:

Junk Drawer
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920

JUNK DRAWER video games

by Steve Brown

A Video Game Guide to Spidey

Since last month's column took a gander at all the DC Comics-related video games out there, as promised, this time we'll do it up for Marvel.

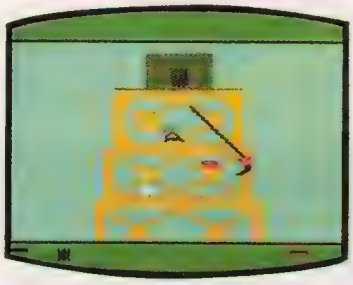
Unlike its motion pictures, Marvel has actually had some success in the video game arena. Overall, Marvel has sold more games than DC and has even had a higher quality of gameplay. Spidey and the mutant-militia X-Men are basically the entire story (certainly sales-wise). Given the great number of games for both franchises, we'll divide the field and give Spidey the spotlight first.

MARVEL'S #1 FRANCHISE PLAYER

In 1982, the Atari 2600 (Yaaaay!) was a dominant force in many kids' lives. Parker Brothers licensed Spider-Man in hopes that the CBS television series would buoy sales. The good news was that the game was a runaway hit, even as the tepid TV series was canceled. The bad news was that the actual game really lacked any fun elements at all and was a bit frustrating. The cartridge itself is not that scarce, but the box with instructions is very collectible—$18 could land you a sealed copy. Nine years later, the Atari 2600 was a memory. Sniff.

SEGA GRABS THE REIGNS

1991 was the year of the Sega Genesis. The Sega-programmed *Spider-Man* was awesome for its time—a perfect blend of comics and video games. Eventually released for the Game Gear, it featured a who's who of spider-villainy: Dr. Octopus, Hobgoblin, Sandman, Lizard, Kingpin, Venom and Electro. This is the grandfather of the superhero video game. All the game-playing elements debuted here, including side-scrolling, bosses at the ends of levels, endless drones to punch and kick, weapon power-ups, an epic master plot-line and the main selling point: kick-ass graphics. With millions of Spidey cartridges sold, that title remains one of Sega's all-time best-sellers. As a result, it's fairly common. Fifteen bucks oughta get you a copy. Later in 1991, Nintendo released a watered-down version for the dying NES 8-bit and the underrated Game Gear.



LJN held the rights and renamed it *Spider-Man vs. the Sinister Six*. The graphics were outstanding for the limitations of the NES hardware. Both versions are still common and can be had for about $10 each. In 1992, Sega was promoting its next generation machine, the Sega-CD—a disaster from the beginning. Crappy games and long loading times, coupled with little internal support from Sega, sunk the Sega-CD. *Spider-Man vs. the Kingpin* was an exact port over from the original Genesis *Spider-Man* with worse gameplay and control than the original.

ACCLAIM TAKES OVER

Acclaim eventually outbid Sega for the rights to all Spidey games, and began cranking out average games with heavy promotion. 1992 begat the arrival of the truly rotten game (even then) *Spider-Man/X-Men: Arcade's Revenge*, which was available for Genesis, SNES, Game Boy and Game Gear. The team-up inferred in the title, however, never materialized, as all the action was purely solo. In addition to Spidey, it starred Wolverine, Storm, Cyclops and Gambit, non-united in combat with Arcade, Shocker, Juggernaut and the Mastermold. *Spider-Man/X-Men*'s fatal flaw was the lack of a save feature, which forced the game to be completed in one sitting!

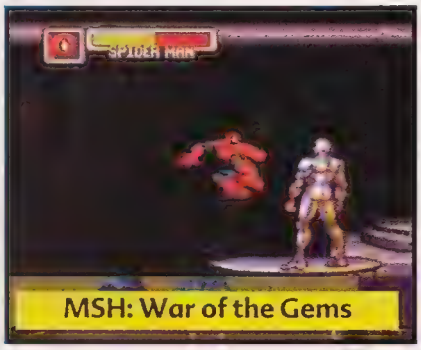
SPIDER-SYMBIOTES!

The epic Spidey storyline "Maximum Carnage" crossed over in all of Marvel's Spidey titles as Spidey, Venom and just about everybody else joined forces to stop that nasty symbiote Carnage. Acclaim's game, based on that concept, was graphically great, but the gameplay has really aged poorly. The coolest aspect of *Maximum Carnage* was the blood red, limited-edition cartridge of the SNES version. *Maximum Carnage* starred Cloak, Dagger, Iron Fist, Deathlok, Captain America, Black Cat, Morbius, Demogoblin and Carnage. A cool feature was that you could play as Spidey *or* Venom (now a hero, no less!). Lackluster sales of all versions forced Acclaim to basically release the same game a year later just to break even.

Spider-Man: Separation Anxiety, was a total rehash of the first game and also sold poorly with Acclaim only releasing SNES and Genesis versions. This time around, Spider-Man and Venom teamed up with various other superheroes to combat five new symbiotes, a litter of Venom-like critters. Captain America, Hawkeye, Ghost Rider and Daredevil all made cameo appearances at various stages of the game. The main problem with both games was the lack of creativity in gameplay execution. While the original *Spider-Man* game had a variety of actions, the newer titles relied too heavily on monotonous punching and kicking.

SPIDER-MAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES

When Marvel announced a new Saturday morning cartoon based on Spidey, Acclaim readied a new cartridge. Learning from the dwindling response to its last game, Acclaim altered the pattern slightly. *Spider-Man: Animated* gave Spidey more to do against more villains. The only guest stars were the Fantastic Four, who aided the wall-crawler against an army of evil. Jack O' Lantern, Lizard, Mysterio, Rhino, Beetle, Doc Ock, Shocker, Venom, Spider-Slayer and the Green Goblin provided the foils. Although a slight improvement over the previous games, the title was available at deep discounts only months after release.



MSH: War of the Gems

TO THE INFINITY GAUNTLET AND BEYOND

The 32X (Sega's aborted game system), saw the release of the most-recent Spidey video game, *Spider-Man: Web of Fire*, an OK release with above-average graphics and a semblance of playability. The combination of a limited release and Sega's abandonment of the 32X unit makes this an extremely difficult game to find.

And sadly, except for a co-starring role in *Marvel Super-Heroes: War of the Gems*, there's no new Spidey games on the horizon. And speaking o' horizons…

Next month: Here come da X-Men!

PLUG IN

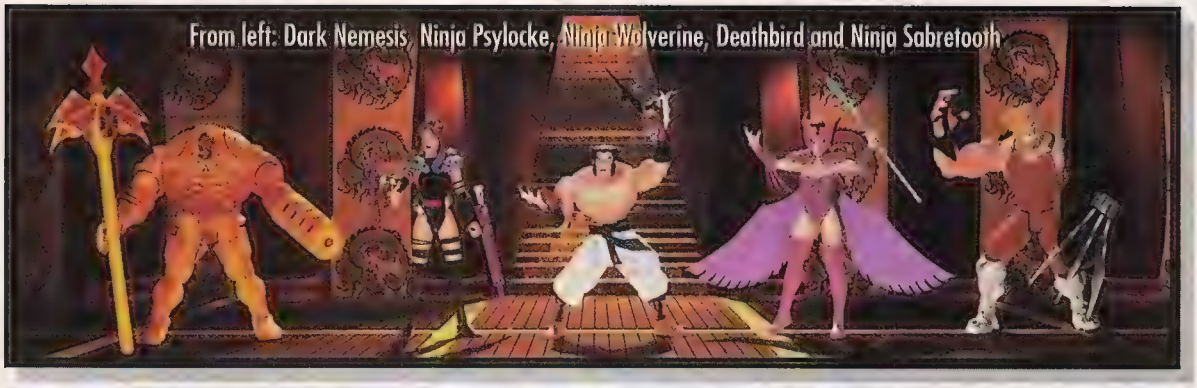
The Latest in Video Game News

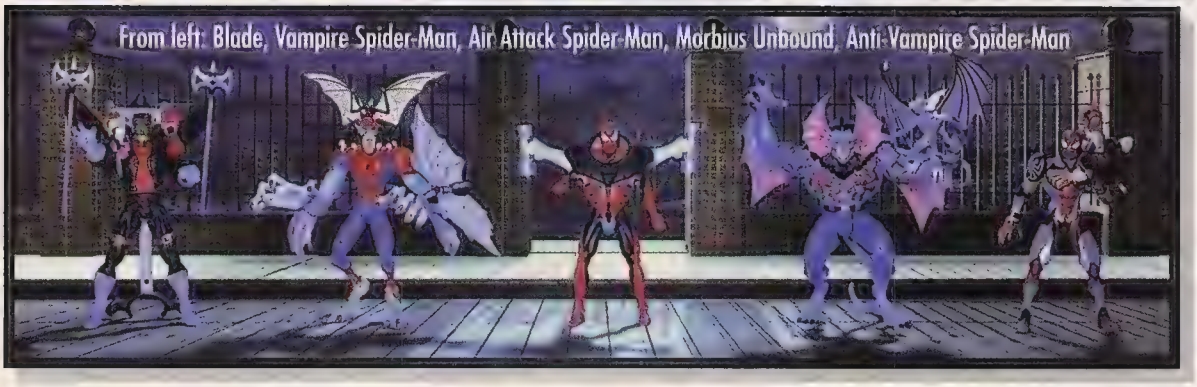
The Women Behind the Men

The newest X-Men video game coming from Sega doesn't star the X-Men at all. *X-Women* for the Genesis (originally mentioned in *Wizard* #60's E3 report) stars Rogue, Storm and Phoenix. These three X-babes must stop Mr. Sinister and his mutated Legacy virus that's rendered all male mutants unconscious and will ultimately kill them. The game has an international flavor, with locales such as Egypt, South America and even the moon! With 10 levels of gameplay, expect lots o' 3-D graphics, increased frame rates and tons of side-scrolling action.

THE TOY CHEST

NINJAS & VAMPIRES INVADE TOY BIZ





TOY BIZ'S X-MEN NINJA FORCE (TOP) AND SPIDER-MAN VAMPIRE WARS

Two wild new action figure assortments for the Toy Biz Spider-Man and X-Men lines are on the way. These figures follow on the heels of the current release of the X-Men Battle Brigade assortment (Archangel, Beast, Colossus, Lady Deathstrike and Patch Wolverine) and the Spider-Man Techno Wars assortment where each figure comes with snap-on armor to beef up your characters. Included in the series is Anti-Symbiote Spider-Man, The Guardsman, Hyper-Tech Spider-Man, Radiation Suit Spider-Man and Ultimate Octopus.

Arriving in toy stores in late October is the brand-new Spider-Man Vampire Wars assortment, including characters from the five-part Morbius storyline featured on the animated "Spider-Man" series. The assortment consists of Morbius Unbound, Vampire Spider-Man, Anti-Vampire Spider-Man, Air Attack Spider-Man and Blade, the Vampire Hunter.

The new X-Men Mutant Armor assortment, also slated for October release, is identical in theme to the Spidey Techno Wars group and consists of Heavy Metal Beast, Professor X and Quicksilver, as well as Wolverine with anti-magnetism armor and Iceman with crystalline armor.

In November, Toy Biz will ship the cool new X-Men Ninja Force assortment, featuring Ninja Wolverine, Ninja Sabretooth, Ninja Psylocke, Deathbird and Dark Nemesis (a.k.a. Holocaust). Toy Biz felt uncomfortable using the name Holocaust for a toy, hence the change. All of the figures in the four new assortments will carry a suggested retail price of $5.99.

CLASSIC MARVEL CHARACTERS RETURN FROM THE CRYPT

Puzzle Zoo of Santa Monica, Calif., one of the country's largest mail-order toy stores, has announced an arrangement with Toy Biz to produce three exclusive series of action figures featuring Marvel heroes and villains. Using the original molds, the three assortments will consist of reissues and re-decos of Toy Biz's most popular figures from the past, in addition to several new characters. Each figure set will come in unique Marvel Hall of Fame Collector's Edition packaging including a newly designed trading card. With

BY **DAN ALBAUGH** AND THE ***WIZARD STAFF***

a price tag of $34.95 plus shipping for each assortment, quantities will be limited to less than 18,000 per set.

The first series, already in release, will feature repainted versions of Colossus, Deadpool and Rhino, as well as reissues of Daredevil (red costume) and Invisible Woman (vanishing color action). The second assortment, due in late October, will feature an all-female cast: the Black Queen (a White Queen re-deco), Jean Grey, Miss Marvel Universe, Storm (black outfit) and Spider-Woman (new costume). The final series, to be released in late November, consists of reissues of Iceman (color changing) and Venom (flicking tongue action). The remaining figures are Invisible Woman (repainted Spider-Woman body), Spider-Man (multi-jointed with black costume) and Wolverine (removable mask).

MARY JANE AND OTHER VENOMOUS EXCLUSIVES

In other Toy Biz exclusive news, Toys R Us will offer the first-ever five-inch Mary Jane Parker figure as part of a "Famous Couples" two-pack that includes a Peter Parker Spider-Man with removable mask. Look for this one in late October/early November.

In November, Toys R Us will offer two "Alternate X" two-packs featuring classic X-Men alongside their "Age of Apocalypse" incarnations. First up are two-packs devoted to Gambit and Wolverine. Suggested retails for both the "Famous Couples" and "Alternate X" two-packs is around $15.

Finally, Sam's Club is sporting its own Toy Biz exclusives with the current release of "X-Men: Danger Room" and "Venom Saga" four-packs, both with an approximate $20 retail price. "Danger Room" includes a Caged Sabretooth, Nimrod, Wolverine and Gambit.

"Venom Saga" packages Venom, Spider-Man (black costume), the Kingpin and Octo-Spidey all in one convenient box.

GRATUITOUS PLUG

Tired of exclusives yet? No! Great. Check out the *Wizard Toy Special* on sale November 15th for an exclusive offer for a Toy Biz Molten Man action figure. Based on one of Spidey's oldest foes, Molten Man is fully poseable, has a metallic copper finish, will be limited to 7,500 pieces and will NOT be available anywhere else. Ever. Oh, and the *Wizard Toy Special* is a good magazine too. It's just like "Toy Chest," only a lot bigger, with a considerably more kick-ass price guide. Check it out.

KENNER KILLS STAR WARS RUMORS

Recently, Kenner was quick to respond to rumors that the Power of the Force Han Solo Stormtrooper figure would be carded and sold through retail outlets once the Kellogg's exclusive offer expired at the end of this year. According to Kenner's PR Department, a figure used in a mail-in promotion is never sold in any other manner. If the mold for a promotional figure is reused, that figure will be repainted and given

TOYS R US EXCLUSIVE SPIDER-MAN AND MARY JANE!

SCARY WISH LIST

THE 10 ACTION FIGURES THAT WIZARD WANTS TO SEE MADE

(AND SOON)

1) Deadman (DC Heroes)

Though we dig Kelley Jones' take, this figure would be the ultimate concerned Deadman stumped with several suspicious female bodies for ghostly possession dilemma.

2) Arkham Asylum Playset (Batman)

Same idea as the third Alien and Predator Movie Playset, and the iconic dark home of Bat-psycho foes would be very scary, especially with secret passage, padded cells, shock therapy tables, straitjackets, and a psychotic touch. Throw in a brain-sliced Joker figure, and we're ready to game season fun!

3) Universal Monsters Boxed Set

There's some deep cuts and toys to these guys, but this would change all that! Fully articulated and faithful to the original look, the figures of the Frankenstein, Wolfman, Mummy and Creature would include a light up eye and brain gizmo. The Mummy with fresh, articulated and removable bandage limbs. The Wolfman with hairline-coloured wolf head and interchangeable hairy Talbot head and finally, the Creature from the Black Lagoon w/ break-away cage and capture net.

4) Spectre (DC Heroes)

Ready to pounce anything that moves, the Spectre would come in the dark and come engaged with snap-on "Wrath of God" break-away sword, scissors and a huge mallet.

5) Jack 'O Lantern (Spider-Man)

The awesome looking pumpkin head would come with light up pumpkin head and a spring loaded pogo platform that really bounces, at least more anyway!

6) Mephisto (Marvel Heroes)

Uh-oh, don't call him Satan! Anyhoo, Marvel's Prince of Darkness would come with button accented and heavy White ski-cloak, dome of skulls and snap-on energy blast.

7) The Demon (DC Heroes)

DC's resident hellspawn has a spring-loaded "fire-breathing" mouth action (kinda like Human Torch II's chest) and removable cones of hell-fall sharp like too.

8) Man-Wolf (Spider-Man)

Jonathan Lansdale's kid would come with light up eyes, sounds embedded in the chest and removable infrared contacts and a helmet.

9) Jonah Hex (DC Heroes)

Ready to clean house with his whiney Blazer-ish voice and removable pistols, hinged mask, draw-the-sword action.

10) Solomon Grundy (DC Heroes)

"Slaughter's Swamp" favorite, an old zombie with roll-back eyes (then he open when the figure's vertical, closed when it's horizontal) and snap-on seaweed clumps.

Hey! We've spoken and the toy companies are listening! Some of the figures we've plugged have already gone into production! Your votes count! Drop us a note with your "dream figures" at:

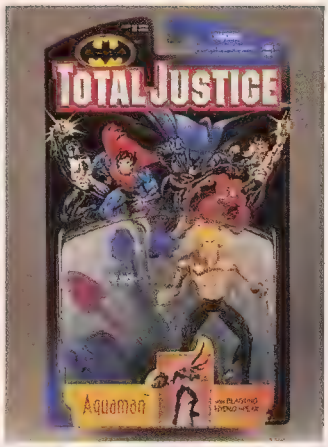
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Avenue
Congers, NY 10920

Or e-mail us at:
WizardTGTC@aol.com.

different accessories. By the way, Kenner has no further mail-in promotions planned for the remainder of 1996.

And despite hobby reports to the contrary, a Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire Jawa two-pack will not be released in 1996.

Hasbro also reports that in the new Batman: Total Justice series, already in stores, Aquaman will be the first assortment's rare figure. Beginning in October, the figure will become even more collectible when the color of Aquaman's armor will be re-decoed from gun-metal gray to gold for a limited run. A DC Comics *Total Justice* mini-series will tie-in with the action figure line, just like *Super Powers* did back in 1984!



KENNER'S "RARE" GOLD ARMOR AQUAMAN

ISZES AND ALIENS OVERTAKE FAO SCHWARZ

Fans of Sam Kieth's The Maxx will be happy to know that FAO Schwarz is currently offering an exclusive Maxx figure from McFarlane Toys. The repainted Maxx comes packaged with not one, not two...but four Iszes (two white and two black)!

Also currently available as an FAO Schwarz-exclusive is an ID4 Alien Battlesuit from Trendmasters. With a special silver-plated finish, the figure is limited to just 10,000 pieces, so get 'em before they're all gone.

HERRRRRRRE'S JONNY

Hanna-Barbera's classic "The Adventures of Jonny Quest," which made its TV debut in 1964, was recently updated last fall in the form of "The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest," an animated series airing 21 times weekly on Ted Turner's TNT, WTBS and The Cartoon Network.

To accompany Jonny and his pals on their new adventures, Galoob Toys is producing an exciting line of Jonny Quest action figures (with awesome articulation and accessories!!!) and vehicles. Actually, two lines of Quest figures can be found—10 "Real World" figures, plus four figures from the computerized alternate reality known as "QuestWorld."

Issued as two-packs, Real World figures include Night Stryker Jonny, Shuttle Pilot Jonny, X-treme Action Jonny, Desert Stealth Hadji, Safari Stryker Hadji, Deep Sea Race Bannon, Drop Zone Race Bannon, Jungle Commander Dr. Quest, Silent Storm Jessie, plus bad guy Ezekial Rage. Suggested retail for the two-packs is $9.99.

Each QuestWorld figure is packaged with a vehicle and retails for approximately $17.99. Included in the group are Jonny with Cyber Cycle, Hadji with Cyber Suit, Race Bannon with Cyber Jet, and the villain Surd with Cyber Trax.

Hurtling the adventurers to action are a variety of new vehicles. The Quest Rover, packaged with Race Bannon, is a 4x4 sport utility vehicle equipped with a spring-loaded "basher" bumper, firing net shooter, a flip-up navigational site and room for four figures. The Quest Porpoise is a submarine that features a propeller, gripper claw, launching torpedo and positionable telescope, and comes with an exclusive Deep Diving Jonny figure. Both the Quest Rover and Quest Porpoise retail for $17.99. Last, but not least, is the QuestWorld Cyber Copter ($27.99) whose main features are a spring-loaded missile launcher and a light-up "brain."

DEATHS AND DELAYS

Due to the cancellation of the teenage sci-fi TV show "Hypernauts," Playmates has scrapped its plans to issue a related line of action figures and accessories.

Although Trendmasters reassures that a deal has been struck with Rob Liefeld, don't expect to see any new Youngblood figures until 1997.

UltraForce fans will be disappointed to learn that Galoob plans no further additions to that line.

HOLY TERROR

Antarctic Press of San Antonio, Texas, recently announced the November release of an action figure based on its comic book property, Warrior Nun Areala. The five-inch poseable figure will be available exclusively through comic and hobby stores at a suggested retail of $10.95. With weapon accessories and actual cloth garments, the carded figure will surely put all other nun figures to shame! A spokesperson for Antarctic reported that approximately 15,000 figures will be produced and, depending on the success of the initial figure, another production run will follow in three to four months. If everything goes as planned, an entire assortment of Antarctic figures will be available by December 1997.

Currently, retailers ordering a case of five figures will find that the fifth figure is a specially decorated Warrior Nun Areala, complete with a new paint job and rhinestones—for those nights out on the town, of course. W

Dan Albaugh prefers rhinestones to sequins any day of the week.

GALOOB'S QUEST ROVER WITH RACE BANNON, NIGHT STRYKER JONNY AND BANDIT

Sirius Entertainment Presents:

The Shed a Tear for Dawn Contest

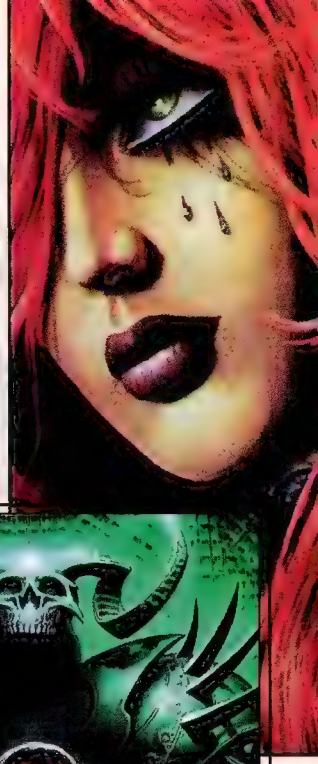
Hey, it's October. That means it's time for Dawn, Joseph Michael Linsner's greatest creation, to return to her roots in *Crypt of Dawn.* What's that, you ask? It's an all-new Halloween-y book in which the Goddess of Birth herself will introduce and present a variety of stories.

And if that's not enough to get you pumped about what's happening at Sirius, maybe we ought to tell you that *Dawn #4* just hit and *Dawn #5* will be hot on its heels.

And if that's *still* not enough to get you going, maybe we ought to tell you that you can win Joseph Michael Linsner original art right here. Yeah, that ought to do it.

So How Do I Do That?

It's a breeze. We want you to show us how much you want to win by shedding a tear for Dawn. Just draw the Dawn "teardrop" logo (as seen here) on your face, photograph it and send in a picture. Winners will be chosen by random drawing. You could win:



Grand Prize (1): One reader will receive a rarity among rarities—a piece of Joseph Michael Linsner original art! Hey! One sold at a Comic Book Legal Defense Fund benefit auction recently for over $3,000! And as if that weren't enough, we'll even toss in copies of *Dawn* #4 and *Dawn* #5 (the fancy-shmantzy alternate cover editions, no less) autographed by Joseph Michael Linsner and a copy of *The Crypt of Dawn* autographed by Linsner.

Second Prize (1): One reader will receive those same alternate edition copies of *Dawn* #4 and *Dawn* #5, plus a super-scarce special-edition copy of *The Crypt of Dawn* autographed by Linsner!

Runner-up (20): Twenty readers will each receive regular-edition copies of *Dawn* #4 and *The Crypt of Dawn* autographed by Joseph Michael Linsner.

This contest is sponsored by Sirius Entertainment, and dammit, they're, uh, serious about entertainment.

Fill this sucker out, put it in an envelope and send it to: Shed a Tear For Dawn Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. **Deadline is November 29, 1996. Cry baby cry!**

Dawn of the Legal Text

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Sirius Entertainment and their immediate families or Tony Orlando and Dawn. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch index card and attach your photo. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Shed a Tear For Dawn Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. Tie a yellow ribbon around this, Tony Orlando, you lousy-ass, low-rent, polyester-clad lounge singer!!! **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by November 29, 1996.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected by random drawing from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Drawing will take place on December 16, 1996.
For a list of winners, available after December 16, 1996, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Shed a Tear For Dawn Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Shed a Tear for Dawn Entry Form

DEADLINE IS NOV. 29, 1996!

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Attach your photo yet? You'd better.

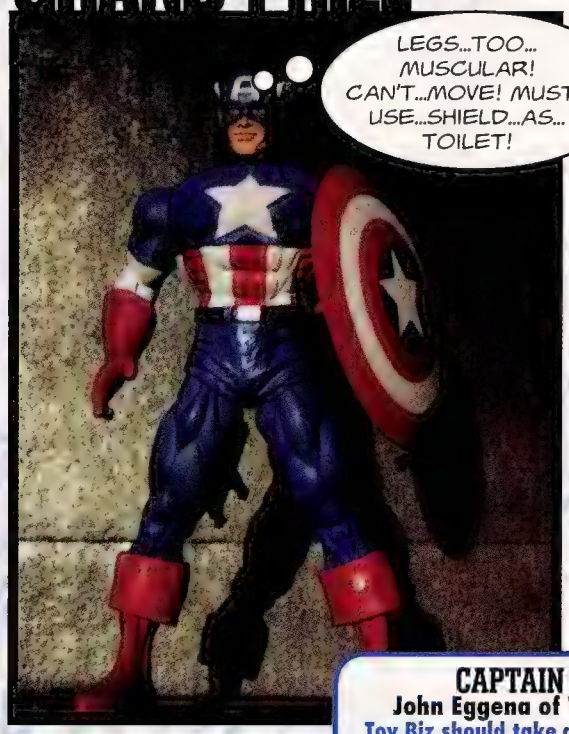
HOMEMADE HEROES

THE ARENA FOR FAN-MADE ACTION FIGURES.

All of the following figures were made from plain old, ordinary figures and household materials, and each of these talented creators will receive two 5-inch Toy Biz Marvel action figures. The Runner-Up will also get a 10-inch Toy Biz Marvel action figure, and the Grand Prize Winner brings home all that stuff plus a Toy Biz Marvel model kit. Super work, folks!

Thanks to the folks from Toy Biz for their generous donation of prizes. You guys are the blood in our IV drips!

GRAND PRIZE



CAPTAIN AMERICA
John Eggena of Watertown, S.D.
Toy Biz should take a look at this Captain America (hint, hint) made from a 10-inch Archangel figure! Ain't he dreamy?

IRON FIST
Trevor Ellis of Brockton, Mass.
Repainting a Toy Biz Daredevil figure and adding cloth for the collar and loose flaps, Trevor made this Iron Fist ready for action.

RUNNER-UP

*The worst part is he didn't wash his hand after using the crapper. All I can taste is fat clown ass.

CLOWN
Les Skwarek of East Haddam, Conn.
This Spawn villain was hand-sculpted outta clay. Sure would hate to be that head, though.

MAN...THIS IS ONE WEIRD FREAKIN' DREAM I'M HAVING.

JEAN GREY

David R. Ludwig of Williamsburg, Va.

Jean Grey is a repainted Phoenix figure, and David even tossed in cool Toy Biz packaging for detail. Groovy.

A VILLAIN! RUFFERTO, QUICK...JAM YOUR SNOUT IN HIS CROTCH!

MMM... CROTCH.

GROO & RUFFERTO

Luca Pusterla of Torino, Italy

Sergio Aragonés would be proud. We're guessing Luca made this statue from scratch.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I GIVE YOU "HEROES REBORN," PART II! AND YES, THE APOCALYPSE IS UPON US.

BULLWINKLE, MOOSE WITHOUT FEAR & CYCLOPS THE FLYING SQUIRREL

Cameron Tyron of Olympia, Wash.

The fearless moose's torso and arms are made from a Toy Biz Morph figure, his lower body and legs are from a Toy Biz Spider-Man and he's got a Rocky and Bullwinkle Christmas ornament head; some glue and paint finished the job. Cyclops the Flying Squirrel is simply a repainted Rocky from the aforementioned Christmas ornament. (Maybe we'll see these guys in *All Access*.)

HEY!

If you're interested in entering the homemade figure contest, send well lit, clear, color photographs (No Polaroids, and put 'em in a cool or funny pose!), along with your name, address, description of how you created your figure, and your full phone number (including area code) to:

HOMEMADE HEROES
c/o Wizard Press
PO Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

PICKS

WIZARD's list of must-read comic books coming out in October

DAREDEVIL #359

Writer: Karl Kesel
Artists: Cary Nord & Matt Ryan
Release Date: October 2
Cover Price: $2.50

MARVEL In case you haven't noticed, *Daredevil*'s changed directions. Gone is the angst-ridden defender of Hell's Kitchen, replaced by a wisecracking hornhead like the 1960s model. But this is a Silver Age hero with a decided 1990s spin, and most readers seem glad to see him, says writer Karl Kesel.

"The reaction is split between those who enjoy it for being fun and a few—who I'm glad to say seem to be in the minority—who are upset because Daredevil has a sense of humor," he says. "We don't want to emphasize the 'Devil' part of his name, but the complete 'Daredevil' part. He's a guy who does amazing acrobatic stunts, and that almost by definition brings a lighter tone with it."

This issue focuses on Karen Page's new job as a late-night radio talk show host. In stark contrast to how her previous professions as porn star and drug addict affected her relationship with Matt Murdock, this one has a positive effect. "It's the perfect job for Daredevil's girlfriend," Kesel says. Matt can hear her anywhere in the city, thanks to his radar sense, and Karen knows it—so she can pass on information. "Her listeners allow her to 'see' what's happening without her really seeing it—just like Daredevil," Kesel points out. "It has a real romantic aspect to it. Of course, we're going to screw it up soon, but that's another story."

Those other stories include a major battle with the Absorbing Man in #360-#361. "I think Daredevil's best stories are the ones where he's in over his head," Kesel says. That leads into the return of the Black Widow, who's feeling survivor's guilt since her Avengers team disappeared fighting Onslaught. "It's the story of how the Devil tries to redeem the Widow and pull her back from the brink."

If you like *Daredevil*, *Wizard* recommends you read... *Untold Tales of Spider-Man*, which presents the adventures of Spidey when he was just starting out. And check out DC's *Impulse*, the funniest superhero comic on the stands, or *Legion of Super-Heroes* and *Legionnaires*, two more lighthearted but exciting reads.

GREEN LANTERN #81

Writer: Ron Marz
Artists: Darryl Banks & Romeo Tanghal
Release Date: October 2
Cover Price: $3.95 (special expanded collector's edition); $1.75 (regular, smaller edition)

DC COMICS Great Guardians, Hal Jordan is dead! Really! He is! But dead guys don't stay dead, right? "As far as I'm concerned, he's dead," states Ron Marz. "This part of GL history is closed. Times have changed, and we have to move on."

But before we do, we have a chance to say goodbye to the hero who went through so many ch-ch-changes. "In a strange way, this issue was a lot of fun to work on," Marz admits. "It gave me a chance to write what various characters thought of Hal, how they viewed him in the past and present, and what their feelings are about the whole chain of events." Those events, needless to say, started when Coast City went boom. That disrupted Hal's mental state, changing him into a mass-murderer who wiped out the GL Corps and became the cosmic villain Parallax, the guy responsible for *Zero Hour*.

But Hal/Parallax died saving the Earth in *The Final Night* last month, and now the dust is settling. "Hopefully, it's a bittersweet read," Marz says. "I tried to encapsulate the various views of Hal in the DC Universe. For many years, he was a great hero and a great friend to the vast number of these guys." That doesn't mean GL's history is being wiped from the slate, he stresses. "Guy Gardner and John Stewart will continue to pop into the series. We don't want to turn away from the past, but we want to keep moving forward, too."

DC presents the story in two formats—but in this case, the one with the fancy cover provides more features, too. "I was adamant that if the cover was going to add so much to the price, we had to give readers more inside, too," says Marz. The collector's edition includes a reprint of the first Hal Jordan Green Lantern story from *Showcase* #22, wrapped inside a new eight-page story by Marz and artist Gil Kane, who co-created the character.

"It joins the guy who established GL with the young turk who ruined him," Marz laughs. "It was an amazing pleasure to work with Gil, and the art is pure Kane—you won't need a credit to figure out who it is. I hope readers get a kick out of it, because it was a treat to do."

■ Big Picks written by Craig Shutt

If you like *Green Lantern*, *Wizard* recommends you read... *Green Arrow* and *Flash*, which feature cool new heroes using old names.

MORE PICKS

TITLES DENOTED WITH A **MR** CONTAIN MATERIAL THAT'S SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS.

AQUAMAN #27

DC COMICS Aquaman's on a rampage again. Boy, he's nowhere near as friendly as he was back on "The Super Friends." Anyways, this time he's taking his fight to Japan to face the Demon Gate, a new villain who killed the dolphin Porm, Aquaman's adoptive mother. (A dolphin killer? Boy, Peter David sure knows how to push your buttons and make you hate a guy.) By Peter David, Martin Egeland and Howard Shum. **$1.75**

ASTRO CITY (VOL. 2) #3

HOMAGE COMICS While young Astra's downtown chillin' with the homies and trying to find out what it's like bein' normal, the rest of the First Family is going crazy looking for her. Villains beware. Thumbscrews and hot pokers'll be mighty pleasant compared to what the First Family's gonna do to you if they don't find Astra. By Kurt Busiek, Brent Anderson and Will Blyberg. **$2.50**

AVENGERS #2

MARVEL Looks like the Avengers aren't the only people to be transported to another world. Their foes are going with them, too. Kang, that time-traveling guy, pops up to steal the Avengers weapons. Kang vs. the Avengers?!? Whew, now there's a plot for ya! By Rob Liefeld, Jim Valentino, Chap Yaep, Jonathan Sibal and Marlo Alquiza. **$1.95**

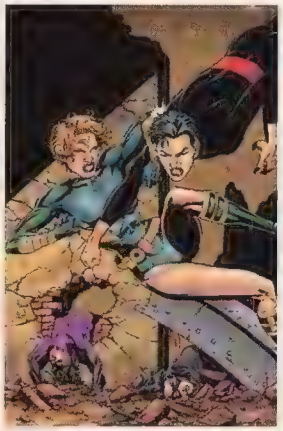
BATMAN #537

DC COMICS Well, seeing as how Man-Bat didn't get his fill of Gothamites when the sun went out in *The Final Night*, he decided to go to the Arctic and eat some members of a scientific expedition. This time, though, he's being chased by three people who want him dead. Luckily for Man-Bat, Batman is on the three killers' trails. It's gonna be a race to see who takes whom down first. By Doug Moench, Kelly Jones and John Beatty. **$1.95**

BATMAN AND ROBIN ADVENTURES #13

DC COMICS There's a new band in town called the Beat Boys, and man are they hip. The only problem is that the Scarecrow is using the band's music to spread fear to the people of Gotham City. Batman, being the square dude he is, is the only one who thinks these young rock-'n-roll teenagers are up to no good. By Ty Templeton, Brandon Kruse and Rick Burchett. **$1.75**

ASTRO CITY (VOL. 2) #3


BIRDS OF PREY: MANHUNT #4

BLACK LAMB #2

DAILY BUGLE #1

BIRDS OF PREY: MANHUNT #4 (OF 4)

DC COMICS Never in the history of comics have you seen a catfight like this one. After taking out Catwoman and the Huntress, Lady Shiva has one more fight to go—Black Canary—and it's gonna be one to remember. Look for hair pulling, nail scratching and articles of clothing being ripped to shreds. Man, stage this in a big ring full of mac n' cheese and you could charge admission. I'd go. By Chuck Dixon, Matt Haley and John Lowe. Dixon says, "I just love the characters—the interaction between them is a blast to write. We got a letter the other day thanking us for a book where the women's asses were covered. I'm proud of that. That guy wrote the letter before he read the book, then he wrote another after about how we exceeded his expectations by the girls identifying the bad guy by *his* butt." **$1.95**

BLACK LAMB #2 (OF 6)

DC COMICS The fur starts flyin' when two werewolf clans go to war. The Black Lamb's gotta choose between a friend and his loyalties to the Court of Monsters and find some way to settle the dispute. Sound weird? Hey, you're catching on. By Timothy "Black Sheep" Truman. **$2.50**

BLOODY MARY #3 (OF 4)

DC COMICS Mary and the Major finally get the full story of how Anderton became the parasite-enhanced villain he is, and all of Mary's past encounters with that rat-bastard are revealed. By Garth Ennis and Carlos Ezquerra. **$2.25**

CAPTAIN AMERICA #2

MARVEL Cap's a hunted man in this ish. On the run from S.H.I.E.L.D. and the Red Skull, he's gotta find some way to avoid capture and show the world that he's a hero. Plus,

MORE PICKS

we'll get to see the new Falcon (who we bet isn't Mark Waid or Ron Garney, though we would pay about $100 to see Waid in a spandex Cap suit). By Rob Liefeld, Jeph Loeb and Jonathan Sibal. **$1.95**

CATWOMAN #40

DC COMICS "Year One" Part 3 (of 3). Batman and his now-ally Catwoman have captured Two-Face and the Penguin. Can these two sweaty, bulging, spandex-dressed heroes now resist the primal urge of lust for each other? By Doug Moench, Jim Balent and Mark Pennington. **$1.95**

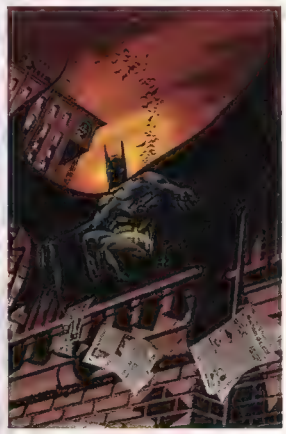
DAILY BUGLE #1 (OF 3)

MARVEL See the inner workings of J. Jonah Jameson's paper, *The Daily Bugle*. This won't have boring stuff like Spider-Man running around and battling the Hobgoblin. Oh no, this will be the men and women of the *Bugle*, doing what they do...taking dictation, talking behind each others' backs and reading "Dilbert." This ish: Ben Urich gets himself in deep trouble with the mob...only he can't figure out why. By Paul Grist, Karl Kerschl and Greg Adams. **$1.95**

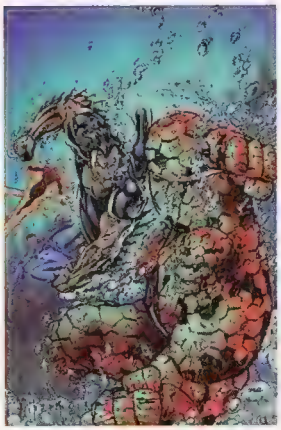
DC/MARVEL: ALL ACCESS #1 (OF 4)

DC COMICS Everyone thought the portal between the Marvel and DC universes was closed after *Marvel vs. DC* #4...but they were wrong. Something's happening again and the heroes are starting to cross over. That wacky guy named Access, the key to the door between the universes, has got to figure out what's going on before bad amalgams start to happen like...like the Absorbing Man and Captain Marvel Jr. making Absorbine Jr., or, um, Bizarro and Zorro making Bizorro. No, wait, Zorro is Topps. Damn, making up these stupid Amalgam characters is tougher than we thought. By Ron Marz, Jackson Guice and Josef Rubinstein. Marz says "It's been a real treat to work on because I can tell more of a story and not have to worry about cramming every character in the univeres in the issue. It's sort of like the next step in the crossover stuff that we started in *DC vs. Marvel*. The first issue will be Superman/Spider-Man vs. Venom. Second is Robin/Jubilee vs. Two-face. In the third, we still see Robin/Jubilee, but Batman and the Scorpion show up. And in issue #4 it's a knock down drag out between the X-Men and the Justice League." **$2.95**

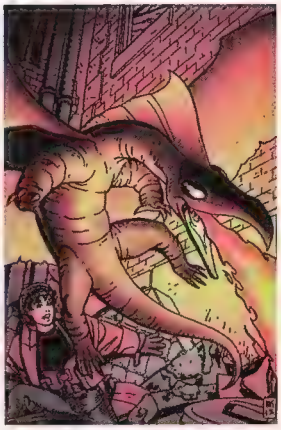
DC/MARVEL: ALL ACCESS #1



DETECTIVE COMICS #704



FANATASTIC FOUR #2



LEAVE IT TO CHANCE #2

DETECTIVE COMICS #704

DC COMICS There just ain't no reforming some people. Take Al Gabone. Here's a guy who just can't seem to stay out of prison. Whenever he gets out, he somehow manages to get thrown right back in (maybe he just likes the showers). Anyway, Al's out again and gettin' into trouble, but this time it ain't with the cops—it's with Batman. By Chuck Dixon, Graham Nolan and Tom Palmer. **$1.95**

FANTASTIC FOUR #2

MARVEL The FF finish beating the hell out of the Mole Man and are all set to relax when, horror of horrors, Namor–in a plot device only mildly less-used than the parallel-dimension "What if the Nazis won World War II?"–decides it's time to declare war on the surface world. By Jim Lee, Brandon Choi and Scott Williams. **$1.95**

THE FLASH #120

DC COMICS "Presidential Race," Part 1 (of 2). Flash is put in a position he's not too comfortable with. (Wonder if it involves having a rubber ball in his mouth?) He's gotta protect a presidential candidate, whose politics he hates, from the Pied Piper. (Um, ain't Piper a good guy these days?) Piper seems to think this candidate is the reincarnation of the villain The Top and is prepared to put a hurtin' on him. (The Top? How'd we miss doing that guy in "Mort of the Month"?) By Mark Waid, Brian Augustyn, Paul Ryan and Jose Marzan Jr. **$1.75**

HITMAN #9

DC COMICS Unless you're already dead, a funeral is no place to be getting shot at. But that's just what happens when Hitman (who isn't dead) and his pals (who also aren't dead) are laying their friend Pat to rest. Two goons, who specialize in offing metahumans, come looking for Hitman and they don't care who gets in their way. By Garth "I spell 'ass' with an 'R' " Ennis and John " 'Arse' sounds better anyway" McCrea. **$2.25**

MORE PICKS

IMPULSE #20

DC COMICS Bart's friends keep picking on him because he's playing video games all the time. So what does he do? He decides he'll give baseball a try...and the sport will never be the same again. Plus, you'll get a chance to see how Bart handles his first smooch. (Wonder how a tongue going down your throat at super-speed feels?) Find out courtesy of Mark Waid, Humberto Ramos and Wayne Faucher. Waid says, "We wanted to get Bart involved in more school stuff, so he tries out for every team there is and the only team that will take him is the baseball team. Unfortunately, Bart has no idea what baseball is about, so it's really just a comedy of errors. In Issue #21, Bart meets the Legion of Super-Heroes. Beyond that, we're planning something big for issues #23, #24, #25—a big three part event that leads him to the 25th issue." **$1.75**

IRON MAN #2

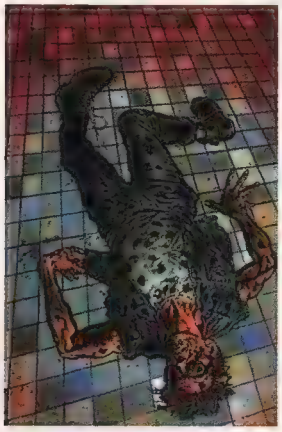
MARVEL Let's get ready to rummmmbllllle! In this corner, weighing 1,150 pounds and wearing the purple trunks...The Incredible Hulk! And in this corner, weighing 240 pounds and wearing red and yellow armor...The Invincible Iron Man! By Jim Lee, Scott Lobdell, Whilce Portacio and Scott Williams. **$1.95**

KANE #16

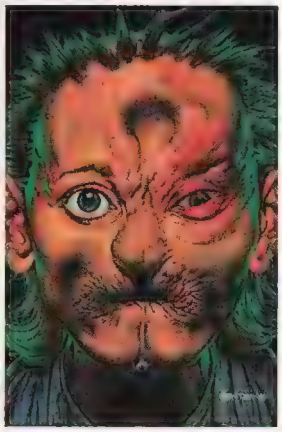
DANCING ELEPHANT PRESS When a sniper takes up residence in Independence Park and starts killing cops, Sgt. Nelson of the NEPD decides to move in and take him down. Now, whether that means a nice easy trip or taking down everyone and everything in the park, doesn't matter to Nelson. All he wants is the sniper. By Paul Grist. **$3.50**

LEAVE IT TO CHANCE #2

HOMAGE Chance is looking into the case of an American Indian shaman who was attacked and put in a coma, but she's in for major surprises. To get to the bottom of the case she's gotta deal with a bunch of mutated thugs, sewer goblins and the worst threat of all...Barney the Purple Dinosaur! Luckily, she's got a cool friend along with her—St. George, a real live, fire-breathing dragon. If things go well, we'll see the dragon kill that hellspawn dinosaur. By James Robinson and Paul Smith. **$2.50**



PREACHER #20



PREACHER SPECIAL: THE STORY OF YOU-KNOW-WHO #1

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #87

DC COMICS The Legion wants to help their ghostly member Apparition get a real body (especially Ultra Boy...he hasn't gotten any since the 27th century), but they need the help of someone who can speak to the dead. And who better to speak to the dead than Deadman? Plus, the romance that flared when the sun was out (*The Final Night* saga, for those not in the know) picks up some speed. By Tom Peyer, Tom McCraw, Lee Moder and Ron Boyd. **$2.25**

LEGIONNAIRES #43

DC COMICS Ever think about becoming a Legionnaire? Of course you have. Who hasn't? Well, now's your chance. Since half the Legion is stuck in the 20th century, the ones in the 30th century are having Legionnaire try-outs! You can bet there'll be a load of freaks and weirdos going out to give it their best shot. By Roger "I'm rooting for Glacial-ass-crevasse Lad" Stern, Tom "I'm partial to Hey-there's-blood-in-my-stool Boy" McCraw, Jeffrey "Me? I'm rootin' for Rectal-halitosis Lass" Moy and W.C. "I...I like Bouncing Boy" Carani. Stern says, "We'll meet a lot of characters who don't become Legionnaires, but will probably figure in future stories. Two of the Legion wannabes who don't make the cut go off and may be doing something along the lines of the Legion of Substitute Heroes. Others may be joining McCauley's Workforce. Others might have more nefarious plans in mind. One of the new Legionnaires wears nothing but a belt." **$2.25**

THE POWER OF SHAZAM! #21

DC COMICS When the big boss of Fawcett City's mob, Muscles McGinnis, is in trouble, it'll take the combined powers of Cap-

WHAT I'M READING

name: **Mike Mignola**

occupation: **Writer and artist of *Hellboy***

currently reads: "*Suckle* by Dave Cooper. He's just the oddest guy around. He has this cute little, weird, warped sensibility. He's my current fave. There's also *Minimum Wage*, the best real life portrayal of living and working in New York that I've ever seen. For someone who's lived and worked in New York...it smells like New York. And *Sin City* is the ballsiest, best-paced giant monster comic out there."

Photo by J. Schuyler

MORE PICKS

tain Marvel and Plastic Man to keep him safe. Of course when you get these two together, a kid who can turn into a super-powered adult and a wacky, stretchy adult who acts like a kid, ya gotta wonder who's gonna keep *them* safe. By Jerry Ordway, Peter Krause and Mike Manley. **$1.75**

PREACHER #20

DC/VERTIGO "Crusaders," Part 2 (of 6). Jesse and Tulip are hot on the trail of Cassidy, but when they get too close, they end up getting caught by a Grail hit squad. It's gonna be a battle royal when the bullets start flyin' and the Word of God starts shoutin'. Plus, you're not gonna believe the kind of examination the Grail puts Cassidy under...and Star takes an even sharper turn down the road of depravity. It's gonna be an interesting ish. By Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon. **MR $2.50**

PREACHER SPECIAL: THE STORY OF YOU-KNOW-WHO #1

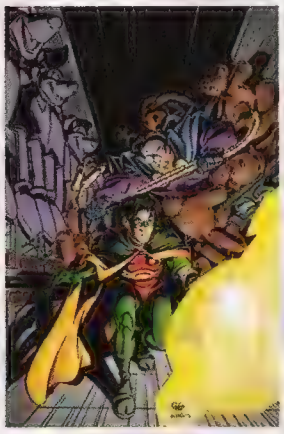
DC/VERTIGO Well, you asked for it and now you'll get it...Arseface! That's right, this is his story. We've found out so little about him in the *Preacher* series, but now it's time for all the background info you've ever wanted to know (and some you'll wish you didn't). Get a look into what his life with Sheriff Hugo Root was like before Arse's botched suicide attempt. Pick up this ish and get to know the kid behind the arseface. By Garth Ennis and Richard Case. **MR $4.95**

ROBIN #36

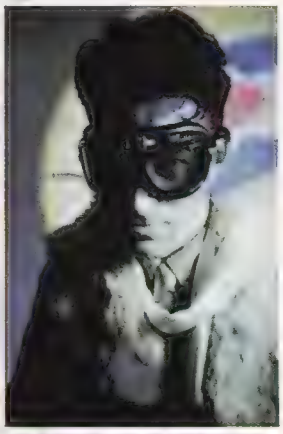
DC COMICS The Toyman and the General have pooled their limited talents to pull off a heist and Robin's the one who's gotta stop it. He shouldn't have too hard a time taking them down—a guy who plays with dolls and an old army brat—nothing our young hero can't handle, right? Plus: two of Tim's friends begin acting weird...like they weren't themselves. By Chuck Dixon, Staz Johnson and Bob Smith. **$1.95**

SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATRE #45

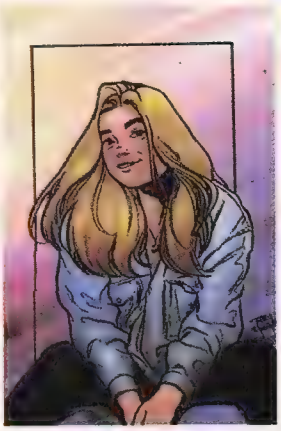
DC COMICS In the midst of WWII, the Germans and Italians have just sealed their alliance when Wesley Dodds (a.k.a. the Golden Age Sandman) is approached by a young Polish pilot to help finance the resistance. Dodds looks into this guy's background and finds that a trail of bodies has been piling up wherever he's been. Thinking that's a little strange, the Sandman dons his gas-mask and does some investigating—only to find out this pilot is a lot more than he seems. By Matt Wagner, Steven Seagle and Matt Smith. Wagner says, "The adventure involves Blackhawk before he is even known by that name—when he's a Polish fighter pilot (Janos Prohaska) who is part of the European Resistance movement against the Nazi encroachment. We'll even see how the nickname is coined. The next storyline features a major change in Diane and Wesley's relationship." **MR $2.50**



ROBIN #36



SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATRE #45



STRANGERS IN PARADISE (VOL. 3) #2

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN #6

STRANGERS IN PARADISE (VOL. 3) #2

HOMAGE The gang is back from their Hawaiian vacation, feeling much more relaxed, looking tan and ready to get naked! Well, maybe not everyone is ready to get naked, but Katchoo wants to do a painting with David as her model—her *nude* model. Meanwhile, Francine's looking for a new job, but finds out that looks count for a lot more in the job market than she first thought—so she treks off to the gym to start getting in shape. By Terry Moore. **$2.75**

STRAY BULLETS #11

EL CAPITÁN When you're stuck in a two-bit, boring-as-golf, do-nothing town, the only thing that can really bring you out of your funk might be midget tossing. Unfortunately for Beth, Orson and Nina, that's not an option. They're holed up and hiding out in a town called Seaside, and they're starting to go stir crazy—especially Nina. So it's up to Beth to find a way to cheer her up. By David Lapham. **$2.95**

SUPERMAN ADVENTURES #2

DC COMICS Metallo's in town and he's got a plan: Kidnap the woman claiming to be Superman's girlfriend to draw Supes out...then kill him. Yeah, like they'd run this book for two months and then cancel it with Supes' death. Our money's on the big "S". By Scott

MORE PICKS

McCloud, Rick Burchett and Terry Austin. **$1.75**

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN #16

MARVEL If you want to know what a true comic should be like, this is the book to pick up. And for only 99 cents, you can't go wrong. In this ish, see Mary Jane Watson before she was Mary Jane Parker. Somehow, she's discovered that Peter Parker is Spider-Man and is terrified of meeting him. Why? Good question. By Kurt Busiek, Pat Olliffe and Al Vey. **99 CENTS**

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN '96

MARVEL The Human Torch and Spidey have always been rivals, but when Spidey goes and asks Invisible Girl out on a date (she's still a swingin' single gal in this story) the over-protective Torch goes ballistic. And, to add a little more danger, Namor decides to pop out of the water and try his luck with Sue again (she's very popular with the boys). Hmm, wonder what the odds are of Joey Buttafucco showing up. By Kurt Busiek, Mike Allred and Joe Sinnott. **$1.95**

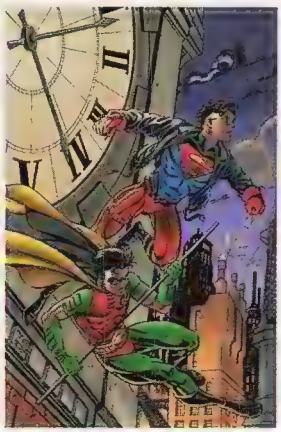
WILDC.A.T.S #33

IMAGE Both sets of 'C.A.T.s are back and fighting on the same side. But will their involvement be enough to stop the gang war waging on the streets? Ladytron discovers the secret behind the war, but will she live to tell it? By Alan Moore, Jim Lee and Richard Bennett. **$2.50**

WORLD'S FINEST: SUPERBOY/ROBIN #1 (OF 2)

DC COMICS The Boy Wonder gave Superboy a call to help rid Gotham of Metallo, but when he arrives, Poison Ivy shows up and puts him under her spell. Now Robin's gotta stop the two villains *and* a mind-controlled Superboy. The good news: Robin does have some kryptonite. The bad news: Superboy's *not* from Krypton. Uh-oh. By Chuck Dixon, Karl Kesel, Tom Grummett and Scott Hanna. **$4.95** **W**

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN '96



WORLD'S FINEST: SUPERBOY/ROBIN #1

AT A GLANCE!

A listing of the high-profile books shipping in October

Action Comics #728 (DC) Supes returns to his Fortress of Solitude for a little rest, but he finds a weird alien instead. **$1.95**

Adventures of Superman #541 (DC) While Project Cadmus is trying to restore Superman's powers (he lost them in *The Final Night*— again, no less—geez, he's lost them more than he's had 'em), Misa of the Outsiders traps him in a virtual reality world. **$1.95**

Amazing Spider-Man #418 (Marvel) Is it gonna be a boy? A girl? A gigantic spider? Another Spider Clone? Find out what Mary Jane will finally give birth to in this ish. **$1.50**

Cable #38 (Marvel) Cable's gotta overthrow the ruler of the Micro-verse, but will that act leave him trapped there forever? **$1.95**

Curse of the Spawn #2 (Image) There's a new Spawn in town and he's a lot angrier than Al Simmons. And when he decides he wants more power, he's gonna take it. **$1.95**

Gen[13] #14 (Image) The kids get enrolled at UCSD, but will this bunch of Gen-Active teens be able to handle normal, everyday life on a college campus? **$2.50**

Generation X #22 (Marvel) While some of the team help out with trick-or-treatin', the White Queen's got her hands full with a real nightmare who wants to kill her. **$1.95**

Mystique & Sabretooth #1 (of 4) (Marvel) When they first got together, Graydon Creed was born. Now these two have to work together again. Wonder if they'll bump uglies a second time? **$1.95**

Sensational Spider-Man #11 (Marvel) The identity of the villain Gaunt is finally revealed, but it comes at a bad time—just when the Spider-Baby decides it wants to be born! $1.95

Spawn #55 (Image) Spawn and Terry are still working together to take down Jason Wynn, but will their team-up be enough to stop this madman? **$1.95**

Spawn the Impaler #1 (of3) (Image) Find out what would have happened if Spawn had ruled after Vlad the Impaler died. Not a fun world to live in. **$2.95**

Spectacular Spider-Man #241 (Marvel) SPIDEY'S BACK! SPIDEY'S BACK! OH, JOY! OH, HAPPY DAY! We'll finally get a story with the real Spider-Man back in control! **$1.50**

Spider-Man #75 (Marvel) This is it, folks…in this ish you'll find out who's the true Spider-Man—Ben Reilly (UGH) or Peter Parker (WAHOO!). **$2.95**

Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi—The Golden Age of the Sith #1 (of 5) (Dark Horse) Before Luke, Leia and Vader, there were those who braved the unknown void of space to chart the planets. **$2.95**

Superman #118 (DC) Supes' powers are gone. It's up to the Legion of Super-Heroes and the people at LexCorp to figure out how to get them back. **$1.95**

Superman: The Man of Steel #63 (DC) In a last ditch effort to restore his powers, Supes flies into the sun itself! Will his powers be restored or will he become Superextracrispyman? **$1.95**

Tales of the Witchblade #1 (Top Cow) Find out all about the lives and adventures of the previous owners of the Witchblade power. **$2.95**

Uncanny X-Men #339 (Marvel) It's Cyclops against Havok (again) when Cyclops must protect J. Jonah Jameson as Havok wants to stop J.J.J. from revealing dirt on Graydon Creed. **$1.95**

Witchblade #10 (Top Cow) Sara Pezzini, the current Witchblade, is after a serial killer who's stalking New York's streets. **$2.50**

Wolverine #108 (Marvel) Logan goes back to Tokyo and immediately has the murder of his own ward placed on him. It's gonna be a rough day for Wolvie. **$1.95**

X-Files #23 (Topps)
People who've received donated body parts suddenly start dying and it's up to Mulder and Scully to figure out why. **$2.95**

X-Men #59 (Marvel) The X-Men stopped the death of Robert Kelly once, but they'll find out they can't always be around to help him. **$1.95**

Gore Picks

Reading for the damned

BART SIMPSON'S TREEHOUSE OF TERROR 1996

BONGO COMICS Another installment of the Simpsons' terror-filled stories. Inside this ish you'll find tales with the grotesque Sideshow Blob and learn just how evil a little sister can be if she's named Lisa the Exorsister! By Paul Dini and Peter Bagge. **$2.50**

BATMAN: THE LONG HALLOWEEN #1 (OF 13)

DC COMICS Take a look back on the beginnings of the Dark Knight when Gotham City was just becoming the home of villains such as the Joker, Two-Face and the Riddler. And see if you can figure out who the serial killer known only as Holiday really is. By Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale. **$4.95**

CRYPT OF DAWN #1

SIRIUS Check out this special anthology of stories by a bunch o' independent comic writers in the industry. You'll see stories by Joe Linsner, Saverio Tenuta, Robb Horan, the Fillback Bros. and many more. **$2.95**

GHOST RIDER #80

MARVEL Ghost Rider's past comes back to haunt him as the Furies and Valkyrie return. Plus the Black Rose is revealed to be someone Johnny Blaze and Danny Ketch thought was long dead. By Ivan Velez Jr., Salvador Larocca and Sergio Melia. **$1.50**

HELLBOY: WAKE THE DEVIL #5 (OF 5)

DARK HORSE The big conclusion. Hellboy is captured and after being chained and beaten by some monsters, he's forced to confront his real purpose on Earth. And the answer might not be what he wants to hear. Also Gary Gianni's "MonsterMen" concludes. By Mike Mignola. **$2.95**

HOUSE OF SECRETS #3

DC COMICS The Juris continue to harass the people of Seattle, forcing their secrets to come out in the open. Rain tries her best, but can't pry any info out of the Juris about them or the house. And, to top it all off, something just escaped from the house's basement. By Steven Seagle and Teddy Kristiansen. **MR $2.50**

LADY DEATH: THE CRUCIBLE #1 (OF 6)

CHAOS! COMICS Lady Death teams up with the Valkyries to fight for the salvation of the universe! They're up against Genocide, the ultimate aspect of evil, who wants nothing more than to destroy everything, everywhere. By Brian Pulido, Steven Hughes and Jason Jensen. **$3.50**

LOBO/DEMON: HELLOWE'EN #1

DC COMICS Etrigan the Demon hires Lobo to help a dragon destroy the Earth...which is right up Lobo's alley. The only problem might be that the Dragon wants to destroy everything, including Lobo and Etrigan too! By Alan Grant and Vince Giarrano. **$2.25**

NIGHT FORCE #1

DC COMICS Once every 1,000 years the forces of evil rise up to spread mayhem through the world and only the undying Baron Winters knows of their plot. He will do whatever needs to be done, including manipulating innocent people's minds, to stop the forces of darkness. By Marv Wolfman, Brent Anderson and Will Blyberg. **$2.25**

ROBOTECH II: THE SENTINELS HALLOWEEN SPECIAL

ACADEMY COMICS LTD. The Sentinels knew that the Invid were evil creatures, but on a planet called Spheris, they discover that there is an evil worse than they could ever imagine lurking in the shadows. By Jason Waltrip and John Waltrip. **$2.95**

RUNE: HEARTS OF DARKNESS #2 (OF 3)

MARVEL/MALIBU Rune is in control of New York after it's been nearly destroyed. There are some survivors, so the question arises...will Rune eat them or will he simply use them for his twisted schemes? By Doug Moench, James Felder, Kyle Hotz, the Pander Bros. and Tim Bradstreet. **$1.50**

SCARE TACTICS #1

DC COMICS A new brand of creatures of the night are loose and walking without restraint among us normal humans! They're Scare Tactics, a new rock band of teen monsters just trying to make a living and stay away from those who want to destroy them. By Len Kaminski, Anthony Williams and Andy Lanning. **$2.25**

SHI: KAIDAN #1

CRUSADE Check out the anthology of Japanese horror stories collected in this one ish of *Shi: Kaidan*. You'll get your fill from writers such as Stan Sakai, David Mack and *Shi*'s own Billy Tucci. By Billy Tucci, Jamal Igle, Peter Gutierrez, David Mack and Stan Sakai. **$2.95**

SPECTRE #48

DC COMICS After the National Interest wounds the Spectre with the Spear of Destiny, he's in pretty bad shape. Not only is he facing defeat, but possibly total destruction. His only hope lies in the hands of a mysterious sorcerer. By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake. **$2.25**

VAMPIRELLA 25TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

HARRIS In this ish, you'll get see Vampirella as she relives some of her most horrific experiences as a vampire. Plus you'll get a chance to see the first time she met Dracula and the Cult of Chaos. By James Robinson, Amanda Conner, and Jimmy Palmiotti, Ray Lago and tons of other creators. **$5.95**

VAMPIRELLA STRIKES #7

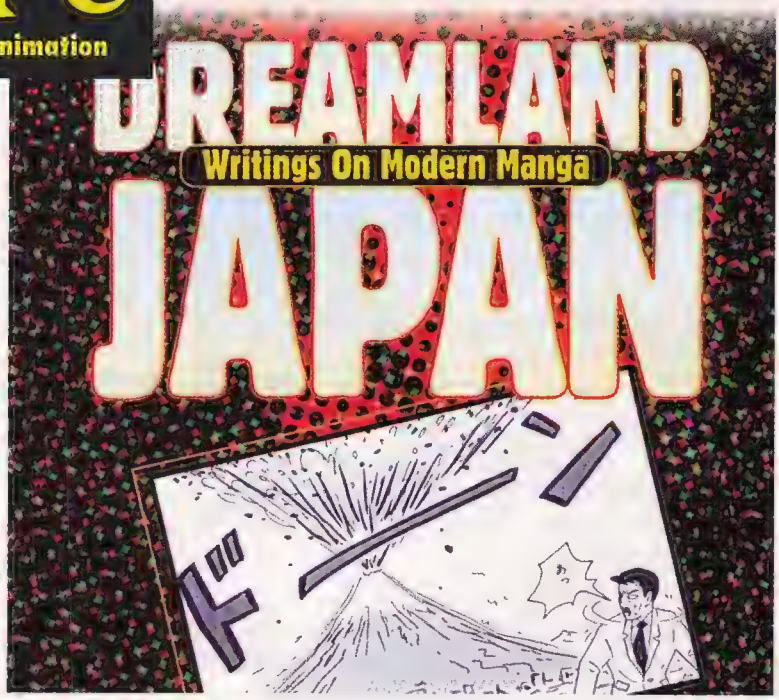
HARRIS A vampire hunter goes after a young woman, thinking her to be a vampire. Vampirella knows she's not and sets out to keep her safe, but endangering herself in the process. Who will be the one to survive the meeting? By Ian Edginton and Rudy D. Nebres. **$2.95**

scene

A guide to Japanese comics and animation

by Carl Gustav Horn

manga fans' promised land



Dreamland Japan: the definitive guide to manga

Twenty bucks was a lot of cash for a 13-year-old to pay for a book (a *book* book, that is) back in 1983, especially when pitted against completing John Byrne's comic book run on *Uncanny X-Men*.

Nevertheless, I plunked my money down for Frederik L. Schodt's *Manga! Manga!*, the definitive work on Japanese comics, written in English. And in that purchase, the urge to pursue Byrne and Marvel's mutants was fading as a strong desire to explore the strange new world of manga surfaced. Literally half a lifetime later, Schodt has returned with a new book, *Dreamland Japan*, an absolute must for those who want to understand the exciting promised land of Japanese comics—just like I did all those years ago.

While many comics fans seem to be jumping on the manga bandwagon these days, Schodt was the forerunner. *Manga! Manga!* was, after all, published four years before the now-defunct First Comics debuted *Lone Wolf and Cub* as the first translated manga series. A personal friend of many notable figures in the manga industry, including its founder, the late Dr. Osamu Tezuka, Schodt is completely fluent in Japanese and was the translator of Masamune Shirow's *Orion* and *Ghost in the Shell* for Dark Horse.

But, as Schodt warns readers at the outset of *Dreamland Japan*, "[American] fans of manga should not expect to see many of their favorite works here," as he believes that readers can form their own opinions on readily available titles in the U.S. such as *Akira* or *Ranma ½*. Instead, Schodt focuses upon "manga and recent trends in manga that most people outside of Japan...have never heard of." But it's exactly this kind of reporting that is most valuable to both the American manga fan and the fan of comics in general. In reading *Dreamland Japan*, fans will realize just how limited a representation of the manga world they've gotten to see so far in the United States, and how great—in size and quality—the manga industry is compared to much of American comics.

At the 1996 San Diego Comic Con, *Pervert Club* creator Will Allison remarked on the twice-yearly Comic Market convention in Japan. Although it is "only" a fan press/self-publisher (*doujinshi*) convention, it's *eight times* the size of the San Diego Con. "Comics in America," says Allison, "are *doujinshi* with no mainstream." In America, the general public doesn't follow comic books—readership is reserved for fans. In *Dreamland Japan*, Schodt illustrates that the mammoth 1,594,750,000 circulation of Japan's 265 comic magazines in 1995 certainly qualifies manga as "mainstream" in that country.

And this success wasn't achieved through chromium covers. The 12 magazines Schodt examines are oriented towards a vast diversity of people—the industry reaches out to every possible demographic group in Japan with a comic for each individual taste. As Schodt relates, even the infamous Aum Shinri Kyo cult published its own comics (and made its own anime!) in order to win recruits. Wide-spectrum appeal is an important part of the incredible success of comics in Japan, and this is despite jettisoning the gaudy gimmicks of so many American comics. Manga are printed on recycled newsprint and are mainly black-and-white. What that amounts to, though, is that manga strip everything down for sheer narrative power. Comics in Japan are built for speed and sales. That's what enables one comic magazine alone, Shogakukan's *Big Comic Spirits*, to sell 1.5 million copies of 350 pages each, for two dollars, *every week*. How does *that* compare to what's going on at your local store?

Besides the major magazines, Schodt devotes almost a hundred pages to spotlighting Japan's most important individual artists and their stories. One such creator is children's favorite Fujiko F. Fujio, whose *Doraemon* has made over $153 million dollars in merchandising royalties in Japan, Europe and Latin America, but is unknown in the U.S. Also featured are the savage underground stylings of Suehiro Maruo, whose "Planet of the Jap" (available here in Blast Books' *Comics Underground Japan*) satirizes unrepentant

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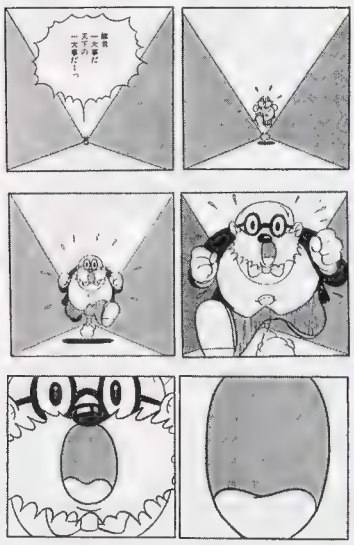
militarism in Japanese society by reversing World War II, with atom bombs being dropped on San Francisco and Los Angeles, and General MacArthur being beheaded as a war criminal.

Schodt continues to devote a special section to explaining the importance of Osamu Tezuka, the anime/manga connection, the future of manga, controversies, industry problems and—what should be of special interest to American manga fans—a look at the publishers of manga in the United States such as Dark Horse, Viz and Antarctic Press. There's a lot of frank talk about the economic and cultural problems that challenge manga's acceptance in the U.S., and the often unusual road it's had here. Schodt maintains, for example, that Masamune Shirow actually made his reputation in the U.S., thanks to American fans, before he made it in his own country. Schodt also points out the important role that unlicensed translations, subtitling and



Dreamland discusses anime old and new

copying have had in increasing the popularity of both anime and manga in America.

Frederik L. Schodt's *Dreamland Japan* manages in 360 pages to give you the full circle of the manga industry, from creator and publisher to critic and censor. As such, it can be given the highest recommendation for anyone who wants to dig beneath the surface of their favorite manga, and those who would like to discover an industry as exciting as the stories it publishes. *Dreamland Japan* is published as a trade paperback by Berkeley's Stone Bridge Press and retails for $16.95. Well worth the price—even with 13 years of inflation! **W**

Carl Gustav Horn is also available in trade paperback for you cheapos unwilling to buy all his back issues.

picks of the month

manga

Blade of the Immortal

(Dark Horse, $2.95, monthly, b&w, 40 pgs.)

When people think "Japan," the word "samurai" often comes to mind. Yet there's been a noticeable lack of manga in the U.S. featuring the feudal warriors since Japanese comics first started coming here in the late '80s with such titles as *Lone Wolf and Cub* and *Kamui*. Hiroaki Samura's dynamic *Blade of the Immortal* helps to fill that gap. Samura's grim wit conjures up Manji, a wanderer strapped with a dozen different blades, his body infested with "sacred bloodworms" that heal him no matter how grisly his battle wounds. When he kills a thousand evildoers, Manji will be free of this painful immortality. *Blade of the Immortal* is especially noteworthy because many manga artists don't like the way their work looks when it's photo-reversed to read left-to-right (like American comics). In *Blade*'s case, Studio Proteus has tried the unusual approach of cutting up the panels and rearranging their order, as well as retaining some sound effects—often, part of the artwork—in their original Japanese. So give it a try.

anime

Galaxy Express 999: The Signature Edition

(Viz Video, subtitled/dubbed, 120 mins. ea., $29.95/$24.95)

Not to be confused with the previous Roger Corman release of this title which was edited, re-written and clumsily dubbed, "Galaxy Express" is now available as it was meant to be seen: the coming-of-age story of Tetsuro, a boy on a trip to Andromeda to find the machine body that will enable him to avenge the death of his mother. Tetsuro boards the "Three-Nine," a legendary spaceship whose steam-train appearance is the result of technology so advanced it's indistinguishable from magic. "Galaxy Express" is based on the manga by "Star Blazers" co-creator Leiji Matsumoto, who exhibits a spirit of romantic adventure and heroism that seems entirely absent in today's "dark future" anime. Yet, Matsumoto remains an unqualified giant, and no one can say they know anime without exposing themselves to his work. Viz has taken a risk by re-releasing something made before many of today's anime fans were born. You owe it to yourself to take a good look.

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a look at some cool stuff with an alternative twist

Li'l Monsters!

Steven Weissman swaps frights for giggles with the monstrous mischief of *Yikes!*

Before you sit down to read Steven Weissman's *Yikes!*, you have to properly break your copy in. Put a few strategic creases and folds on the front cover. Roll it up into a tube and shove it in your back pocket. Or maybe even write your name on the cover with an orange crayon. Whatever you do with *Yikes!*, the key is to have a good time reading it. *Yikes!* is one of those rare titles that comes along and brings back the fun and adventure of enjoying a good comic book. And it's so good that you just may read it until it falls apart in your hands.

Weissman, a 28-year-old California resident, admits that he has a good time creating his comics, and is inspired by the fact that he has the potential to reach so many people with his work. "Comics are so accessible," he argues. "They're the perfect combination of books and television—something that's immediately visual, yet literate. I like [the notion] that anyone can pick up a comic and get interested in some aspect of it."

In fact, *Yikes!* is so accessible, you don't even need to know anything about the characters before reading it, although a passing knowledge of classic movie monsters helps. There's Li'l Bloody, a vampiric bad boy with one fang, and the Pullapart Boy, a blonde-haired patchwork kid (*a la* Frankenstein) who can't keep himself together. They're backed up by a gang that includes Kid Medusa (complete with a green snake hairdo in pigtails), the loneliest gal in town; Dead Boy, a zombie kid with crossed-out eyes who also happens to be Pullapart Boy's older brother; and X-Ray Spence, the See-Thru Boy, a kid who ordered a pair of X-ray glasses from the back of a comic book and can now see through anything…'cept lead, of course.

When you put all of these characters together and throw them into some ordinary (and not-so-ordinary) childish mischief like playground shenanigans and time travel, you get a great collection of entertaining stories. A big part of the fun is Weissman's admittedly cute drawing style. His supple brush lines recall the slick artwork of classic comic books, and he has a knack for drawing overly cute, round "Charlie Brown" heads on all his kid characters.

The idea to do a comic of cute yet "monster-ish" characters came when Weissman dropped out of art school and lived for a time in Taiwan with his wife. There, the average comics fare consisted of manga-like sports comics, but Weissman took a different tact for his own work. "I was always making up different characters in my sketchbooks, but when I was in Taiwan, I challenged myself to try and do something cute," he remembers.

Specific events in Weissman's life have also served as inspiration for several stories in *Yikes!* "Some of the things in the comic are things that happened to me as a kid. I'll change them a little, but a lot of it's completely fictitious. I'll try to get at an emotion or feeling that I felt at a certain time and get a new context for it. My childhood was good, although only semi-interesting—so I can't take that much from it. But there are a couple of things I swiped directly from my real life."

One of the more memorable and cruelly funny experiences that Weissman turned into a *Yikes!* strip is the hilarious "Elzie Crisler" story that appeared on the back cover of issue #5. "Elzie Crisler was actually my neighbor's dog," Weissman explains. "This dog always carried around a slobbery tennis ball. He would follow you

Cover art from *Yikes!* #2

by tom palmer jr.

Kid Medusa

around all day long with it, no matter how many times you took it from him and threw it away. You could throw it around for a little while, but he kept bringing the ball back more and more disgusting.

"One day, my neighbor picked up a baseball bat and a tennis ball and said, 'I'm gonna knock this one for a mile.' He got as far as tossing the ball in the air when the dog jumped up and went for it. My neighbor swung and hit the dog instead! The dog got a concussion and my neighbor got beat up by his dad."

In the *Yikes!* adaptation, the scientist father of Pullapart Boy reanimates a dead dog named Elzie, which then turns into the ultimate "fetcher." "Elzie Crisler" works as a comic strip because of Weissman's expert sense of timing and his scrutiny of the composition of a comic page. Weissman can pay close attention to these things because he publishes *Yikes!* himself. But unlike most self-publishers, he doesn't make a big deal about it. "If somebody came along and proved that they could do a good enough job, and at the same time make it worth my while, I wouldn't mind doing it that way. It's kind of a hassle [to be] self-publishing. But it's good because I can blame myself in the end, instead of saying so-and-so screwed things up."

In order to finance the publishing of *Yikes!*, Weissman makes his living as a freelance illustrator. He draws in his trademark cartoony style for local papers and magazines, but comics are what he really loves. "Illustration has all the immediate advantages. I get a project and it's done in just a few days—*and* it gets people to see my work. It also pays money, whereas comics pay for themselves and that's about it. But with comics I can really do stuff to please myself."

Comic fans admire Weissman's cute and slick drawing style, and he's been able to make a mark with his distinctive illustration work. He's content to enjoy whatever success he has with *Yikes!* right now and not worry about what will happen in the future. "There aren't many people drawing in this style right now, so it's helpful for me," says Weissman. "It might pigeonhole me eventually, but for now it's great because it's getting me work. I'm that guy who can draw those round-headed cute characters. Later on, if it bothered me or I got sick of doing them that way, I could just stop and do something else. But right now I just enjoy it too much." W

When Tom Palmer Jr. grows up, he wants to be a stunt car driver... just like on "The Dukes of Hazzard." Those crazy Dukes never wreck. No sir. Uh-uh.

FYI

The fifth issue of *Yikes!* (the first in color) was released this past summer, and it might be a while before the next one—Weissman is taking a short hiatus from the li'l monsters. In the meantime, look for Weissman's work in various anthologies, including *Last Gasp Comics and Stories* and the upcoming *All Star Pictures* in late '96 or early '97, with work from Weissman's studiomates Mats!? and Joven. If you can't find a copy of *Yikes!* at your local comic store, send $2.50 for a sample issue to Steven Weissman at 564 Market St., Suite 720, San Francisco, CA 94104.

Steven Weissman's Recommended Reading

"There are just so many great new comics, I'd hate to just pick out a couple. But if I had to, I'd mention *Land of Nod* by Jay Stephens, Sam Henderson's *Humor Can Be Funny* collection, *Schizo* by Ivan Brunetti, *Peanuts* by Charles Schultz, and anything by my studiomates Mats!? and Joven. As for stuff I'm reading right now, I picked up a bunch of old digests in the dollar box at the San Diego convention. I got some great Lee and Romita *Amazing Spider-Man* comics, some *Legion of Super-Heroes* digests and a *Supergirl* digest too. That's what I'm reading right now and I think they're great fun."

Recommended Reading

Action Planet Comics Some big mainstream names like Jerry Ordway, Phillip Hester, John Heebink, Ande Parks and others have teamed up under the watchful eye of publisher Mike Manley for *Action Planet Comics* (right). With such wild creations as Manley's "Monsterman," Hester's "Nails," Ordway's "The Messenger," Parks and Hester's "Uncle Slam & Fire Dog," "Carl the Being" by Aaron McClellan and Peter Zale or "Wrathbone & Bitchula" by Heebink, how can you go wrong? There's no unifying theme holding these stories inside one anthology comic, other than the fact that they're all full of great artwork and lots of fun. For more info on *Action Planet Comics*, write to PO Box 2129, Upper Darby, PA 19082

Magic Boy and the Word of God Fresh off of *Little Mister Man* and *Magic Boy and the Robot Elf*, James Kochalka comes back with this self-published gem. Follow the not-so-innocent teenage elf Magic Boy on an off-kilter fantasy featuring a robot duplicate of himself, a cat-like devil, the Floating Head of God and the Holy Squirrel Ghost. If you can't find a copy of *Magic Boy and the Word of God* locally, write directly to James Kochalka Superstar at PO Box 8321, Burlington, VT 05402 and send $3.95 for a copy of your own.

The Topps Company and the Brothers Hildebrandt Present:

The "Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire" art Contest

Greg and Tim Hildebrandt have been known as top-flight fantasy painters for decades. So you know that any project they put their talents to is going to be big. But if they're going to take an entire year out of their lives and their careers to devote to a single project, the property must be truly massive. Empire-wide. Galaxy-spanning, perhaps.

Well, that's just what they did. The Brothers Hildebrandt spent an entire year creating 100 paintings for the biggest trading card set ever to hit this or any other galaxy—The Topps Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire set! And you just might be able to walk away with a piece of it.

How To Play

It's as easy as turning on a lightsaber. Just write a letter to Greg and Tim Hildebrandt (one page maximum) telling them what your favorite Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire card is and why. Make sure you give us the card number so we know just which one you're talking about. And if you have an e-mail address, send us that while you're at it and the Hildebrandts will respond! A random drawing among all entries will determine winners of these..

...Incredible Prizes

Grand Prize (1): One lucky reader will receive a prize the Emperor himself would be proud to have: a Brothers Hildebrandt *original painting* from the Topps *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* card set! This painting is an 11"-by-15" one-of-a-kind original used in production of the set and is valued at no less that $5,000! We'd cross the frozen wastelands of Hoth to lay our hands on this puppy!

Second Prize (9): Nine readers will receive a Brothers Hildebrandt *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* original pencil sketch (approximate retail value: $150)! Before the Bros. actually put paint to canvas, they sketch out what they want a card to look like. These pencil originals are the building blocks on which the set is based!

Third Prize (50): Fifty readers will receive a box of the nifty-swell Topps *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* trading cards (approximate retail value: $55).

This contest is sponsored by The Topps Company and the Brothers Hildebrandt, masters of the artistic form..

Topps®

Edict From the Emperor

Contest is open to U.S./Canadian (except Quebec province) residents, except employees of Wizard Press, The Topps Company, Lucasfilm Ltd. and their immediate families or the Brothers Hildebrandt and their immediate families. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or on a 3-by-5 inch index card and attach your essay to it. Enter as many times as you like, but each entry must contain a new, original essay. Each entry must be mailed separately to: "Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire" Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms will be accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All essays become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. If any prize is won by a minor, it will be awarded in the name of parent or legal guardian. Winner or parent/legal guardian will be required to execute an affidavit of eligibility and publicity/liability release before prize will be awarded. Entrants agree to be bound by these official rules which are final binding in all respects.

Contest void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by December 16, 1996.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected by random drawing from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Drawing will take place on January 2, 1997. Entries will be reviewed and prizes awarded solely by Wizard Press. At no time will any entry material whatsoever be forwarded to or reviewed by Lucasfilm Ltd. Employees of Lucasfilm Ltd. are not eligible to enter the contest. *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* ™ & © 1996 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved. Used under authorization.

For a list of winners, available after January 2, 1997, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: "Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire" Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Fill this out, put it in an envelope and send it to: "Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire" Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Deadline is December 16, 1996. **Use the Force!**

Shadows of the Empire Entry Form

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 16, 1996!

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

E-mail address (if ya gots one) _____

Did you attach your entry?

CHARACTER PROFILE: Vampirella

BY MATTHEW BRADY

VITAL STATS

REAL NAME: Vampirella
AGE: unknown
HEIGHT: 5'8"
WEIGHT: it's not polite to ask ladies this, especially ones with fangs
HAIR COLOR: black
EYE COLOR: green
FIRST APPEARANCE: *Vampirella* #1 (Warren Publishing, 1971)
TITLE CURRENTLY APPEARING IN: *Vampirella: Death and Destruction, Vampirella Strikes, Vampirella: Sad Wings of Destiny, Vampirella of Drakulon*
MAJOR ENEMIES: Mistress Nyx, Hemorrhage, The Nightbeasts of Nyx and the monstrous offspring of Lilith

ORIGIN

Originally, Vampirella believed that she came from the planet Drakulon, an idyllic world where blood ran like water. Paradise was lost, however, when it was revealed that the planet's outer layer was deteriorating, leaving Drakulon unprotected against the blazing fury of its twin suns.

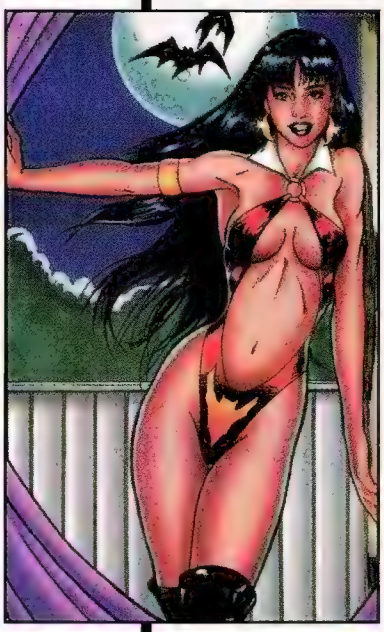
Her survival instinct stimulated by impending doom, Vampirella went against Drakulonian custom, killing the beasts of the planet and drinking their blood to survive. During her rebellion, explorers from Earth landed on Drakulon. The Earthlings were barbaric compared to Drakulonian standards, and Vampirella was forced to attack them to protect herself. Realizing that these Earthlings were filled with life-giving blood, and they would soon return to a planet full of blood-filled creatures, Vampirella stowed away on the spaceship and traveled to Earth, where she became a vampire.

Or did she?

Vampirella has recently learned that she actually is the daughter of Lilith, the first wife of Adam in the Garden of Eden. Strong-willed, Lilith refused Adam's advances, and God sent her to Hell, where she would fornicate with demons, and give birth to over 100 monsters a day. As punishment for refusing Adam, God would kill exactly 100 of Lilith's monstrous offspring every day, leaving some free to roam the Earth. Lilith revealed to Vampirella that she was her favorite child, and was meant to act as Lilith's redemption. Vampirella learned that her true purpose was to destroy Lilith's other children, and end their reign of evil on Earth.

Or was it?

Before Vampirella was killed at the hands of Mistress Nyx, the villainess revealed that everything she knew was a lie. Now the truth about her may never be known.



During her time on Earth, Vampirella has traveled across the globe, battling the forces of darkness while fighting her own dark nature. As a vampire who has always been hesitant to take innocent blood, Vampirella has often found herself in conflict with Earthly vampires, including the legendary Dracula, who sought to use her in his own schemes. In one such plan, Dracula hoped to have Vampirella mate with the mad god Chaos. Dracula's plan was thwarted when another woman took Vampirella's place, and gave birth to Mistress Nyx as a result. Nyx, the daughter of Chaos, subsequently lost her memory, and was "adopted" by human parents.

Throughout her adventures, Vampirella became associated with the Danse Macabre, a paranormal organization that duped Vampirella into doing its dirty work. Vampirella and the Danse Macabre formed an uneasy alliance for many missions.

Also in her adventuring, Vampirella crossed paths with Adam van Helsing, the last in a long line of vampire hunters dating back to Abraham van Helsing, who originally fought Dracula. The two grew close, and became lovers. Through her relationship with Adam, Vampirella learned to curb her bloodlust and her more savage nature, and learned what it meant to be fully human and alive. Adam was Vampirella's rock in a tumultuous sea of supernatural horror.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Recently, the forces of Chaos stepped up their activities on Earth, and freed Mistress Nyx from years of amnesia regarding her true identity and purpose on Earth. Now free to let chaos loose on the Earth, Nyx took the madman Hemorrhage (who can telekinetically control blood and form it into weapons) as her lover and personal assassin. In her opening attack, Nyx decimated the Danse Macabre, killing many people whom Vampirella held dear. Captured by Nyx's forces, Vampirella nearly went mad with grief when Nyx killed Adam in front of her eyes.

Nyx and Hemorrhage continued their systematic destruction of Vampirella's world by killing her ally, Passion, and wreaking havoc across the country. Finally, Vampirella tracked Nyx down, and confronted her.

Vampirella was then killed during a battle with Mistress Nyx.

Or was she?

UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

Following Vampirella's death in *Vampirella: Death and Destruction #3*, her close friend Pendragon will find her personal journal in *Vampirella: Sad Wings of Destiny*, written by David Quinn, and featuring art from today's top talents. The issue is a one-shot that features the 12 most important aspects of Vampi's career, with her personal notes on each. Proving that you can't keep a good Bad Girl down for long, Vampirella's next three-part mini-series, *Vampirella Lives*, will launch in December, written by Warren Ellis and drawn by Amanda Conner and Jimmy Palmiotti. The series will revive Vampi and reveal her new mission and status quo in the world. Following *Vampirella Lives* early next year will be the two-part *Vampirella: Bloodlust*, written by James Robinson and painted by Joe Jusko. *Bloodlust* will reveal where Vampi went and what happened to her while she was dead.

RECOMMENDED HIGHLIGHTS

Thirsty for more? Check out these tasty, chock-full-o-blood picks by Vampi editor David Bogart and the *Wizard* staff:

- ***Vampirella: The Dracula War***—"It's really good stuff. It was the first Harris color Vampi series, and we really showed what we could do with the character."
- ***Vengeance of Vampirella #1***—"It really set the tone and direction of Vampi for the next few years," Bogart says. Plus it's got the first appearance of the blood-nut, Hemorrhage.
- ***Vengeance of Vampirella #14-#19***—In the arc called "The Mystery Walk," Vampirella questions her true origins, and learns that she's not E.T. in a G-string, but actually the daughter of Lilith.
- ***Vengeance of Vampirella #25***—The end. Hemorrhage and Mistress Nyx systematically destroy Vampi's world.
- ***Vampirella: Death and Destruction #1-#3***—It is here that Vampi meets her demise at the hands of Mistress Nyx. "In *Death and Destruction*, we gave Vampi a depth of character that hasn't been seen before, and I think a lot of folks didn't think we could reach. Plus, it sets the stage for everything later this year."

SIMILAR TASTES

Looking for something in a similar vein (sorry, couldn't resist that one) as Vampirella? David Bogart suggests these books, which feature solid supernatural stories and great art: *Lady Death* from Chaos!, *Hellboy* from Dark Horse, and *Hellblazer* and *The Books of Magic* from Vertigo. W

Matthew Brady, who interviewed Grant Morrison in this issue, still believes, despite Vampi's looks and attire, the only good vampire is a dead vampire.

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by Joyce M. Steel

Haunted House of Cards

It wouldn't be right to start October's rundown with anything but the spooky, spectacular Halloween fare a couple of the card manufacturers are cookin' up fer ya!

First, classic horror flick fans should check out Kitchen Sink Press' *Universal Monsters of the Silver Screen* series. Licensed from Universal Pictures—Hollywood's king of the creeps for decades—this 90-card set features rare stills from over 70 of the studio's films shot between 1923 and 1960, and packs such popular monsters as Dracula and Frankenstein, along with lesser-known creatures like Leech Woman and the She-Wolf of London. Chase cards include 10 original movie poster stickers (one per pack), 12 randomly inserted Chromium key actor biography cards (guaranteed one set per box) and an Ultra-Chase card (one per case) redeemable for an uncut sheet of the series (eight cards/one sticker per pack, suggested retail $1.79).

If that ain't enough, Comic Images'll have you laughing with a silly scare-fest: the first-ever series based on horror's sexiest vamp! *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark Collector Cards*, a 24-point stock, 72-card chiller, features seldom-seen photos of the pop culture sensation. Chase cards include six "Spookshow" Chromium cards and 500 Elvira Autographed cards, each randomly inserted (seven cards per pack, suggested retail $1.29).

FLEER/SKYBOX UPDATE

Remember *Superman Holo*, that nifty all Hologram series Fleer/Skybox released a while back? Well, the company's releasing a *Batman Holo* series that promises to be just as groovy as the Superman one, using their exclusive 3-D model technology. There are 50 cards in the basic set, and two levels of chase cards, including four HoloAction (1:3 packs) and a HoloCel (1:36). Be warned—the price tag's a little hefty (two cards per pack, suggested retail $4.99).

Speaking of hefty, card shop shelves are buckling under the weight of *Marvel Ultra: Onslaught*, cards based on the comics storyline that has the Marvel Universe going kaput! Mike Deodato Jr., Humberto Ramos, and Adam and Andy Kubert are joined by "Heroes Reborn" creators Jim Lee and Rob Liefeld for this 100-card event. Chase cards include six Canvas cards (1:6), and four OverPower Hero cards and seven OverPower Powerblast Mission cards—both of which can be used in the *OverPower* CCG (1:9). Three Mirage flicker cards (1:36) and 300 randomly inserted autographed cards—100 each from Lee, Liefeld and Stan "The Man" Lee round out the set (eight cards per pack, suggested retail $1.99).

WORTH-A-MENTION DEPARTMENT

- **SkyBox is flying solo** this month with *Babylon 5*, a 60-card review of the cult sci-fi show's third season. The set spotlights the dramatic second season finale, along with episodes from season three and some early series history. Bonuses include The Coming of Shadows subset, a Creator's Collection, trivia cards and fold-out posters.

- **Fans of the Gen13** comic will want to keep an eye out for *Gen '96*, a 90-card WildStorm effort in all-Chromium that features brand-new art and two levels of chase cards that include five oversized cards of storyboard art from the upcoming "Gen13" animated flick and nine Gen-alloy cards (eight cards per pack). Chase card ratios and suggested retail were unavailable at press time.

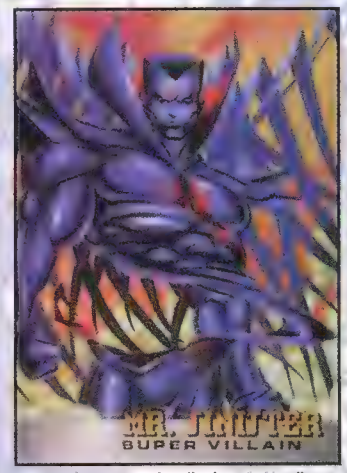
- **E.T. phones home** this month as the blockbuster Steven Spielberg flick inspires an *E.T. the Extraterrestrial Topps Widevision* set coinciding with the re-release of the family classic on video. The 72-carder is chased by six Holo-Foil cards (1:12) and a MultiMotion lenticular card (1:288) of the cute li'l alien guy (nine cards per pack, suggested retail $1.99).

- **Finally,** everyone's favorite fat cat from the comic strips, Garfield, returns from Krome Productions. The new *Garfield* 90-carder's the same as the set they released in March, but it's in all-Chromium and promises a few mysterious surprises (five cards per pack, suggested retail $2.25-$2.50).

Joyce Steel has a few mysterious surprises growing in her refrigerator. We'd recommend avoiding her leftovers at all costs.

The original uncensored Nirvana Nevermind *album cover.* Kitchen Sink Press' *Universal Monsters of the Silver Screen* series

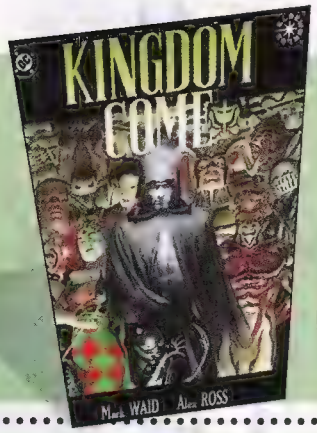
"Uunngghh!! You'd better not peek over the top of the stall." Kitchen Sink Press' *Universal Monsters of the Silver Screen* series



Mr. Sinister's Ab Roller by Romco will melt away your flabby stomach. *Marvel Ultra: Onslaught*

***Wizard*, by staying in touch with hundreds of retailers throughout the country, keeps a close eye on the country's hottest back issues. Here are September's hottest back issues.**

TOP 10 COMICS



1. KINGDOM COME #1

WRITER: Mark Waid ARTIST: Alex Ross

Hear us now, believe us later and think about it in the meantime: Someday, *Kingdom Come* will find itself in that elite pantheon of comics inhabited by the likes of *The Dark Knight Returns, Watchmen* and the introductions of Galactus and the Silver Surfer—it will be an all-time classic.

Waid's explosive tale of heroes gone bad and Ross' stunning true-to-life visuals make this one of the most popular comics ever. It's so good that one day, it will find itself in the mythical comic book Hall of Fame, once the passage of time gives *Kingdom Come* a bit of historical perspective.

Then again, with issue #1 in the #1 slot, maybe that day is today.

2. WITCHBLADE #1

WRITERS: David Wohl and Brian Haberlin ARTISTS: Michael Turner and D-Tron

In this issue of *Switchblade:* Someone gets knifed! See the fight to the finish between the Sharks and the Jets as the shivs fly!

Actually, that's what our computer spell-checker thinks this title is. Ever try running "Witchblade" through a spell check? How about "D-Tron"? It ain't pretty.

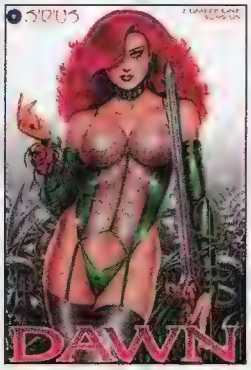
But what *is* pretty is that thar Witchblade gauntlet. For an engine of mass destruction, it makes a mighty spiffy-looking fashion accessory. Goes nice with Sara Pezzini's collection of incredibly form-fitting red dresses. It's what all the well dressed heroines would be wearing this fall, if only they could. The Witchblade can only be worn by one person in each generation, and Sara is the gauntlet's choice this time around.

3. WOLVERINE #100

WRITER: Larry Hama
ARTISTS: Adam Kubert and Dan Green

Just getting a filling at the dentist is enough to make most of us go screaming into the night like little schoolgirls. But just try and imagine getting all of your bones coated with adamantium. Now *that's* enough to drive any mutant into a regressive and feral physical state (though that doesn't explain where his nose went). But while Wolvie may have rejected the adamantium, the multitudes of howling fanboys didn't reject this issue, making it the hottest—well, okay, *third* hottest book on the planet. (Hey, Marvel—give Wolvie some implants, slap a pair of panties and a bra on 'im and, BOOM, you'd have the #1 slot! And just think of the action figure possibilities…)

NUMBER THREE



NUMBER FOUR

4. DAWN #1

WRITER: Joseph Michael Linsner
ARTIST: Joseph Michael Linsner

We like Dawn. Dawn the character, *Dawn* the title, dawn the beginning and dawn the sunrise. We also like EZ-Cheese, but that's kinda beside the point. Why do we like Dawn? 'Cause she's the embodiment (And what a body, at that!) of birth. Of rebirth. Of life in general. That means she's pretty much all-powerful. She even gets to hang around with God, which is cooler than hanging around with Dennis Rodman, although not by much. We also like Dawn 'cause, much like Charlie Brown, we've always had this thing for red-haired girls.

NUMBER FIVE

5. PREACHER #1

WRITER: Garth Ennis
ARTIST: Steve Dillon

We also like *Preacher*. But we like it for completely different reasons than *Dawn*. We like it 'cause it finds a way to shock the hell out of us in a completely different manner each month. Grotesque failed suicide attempt? It's in there! Severed body parts? It's in there! Armadillo buggering? It's in there! One-eyed inbreeds from the bayou? It's in there! Republicans in the White House? We thank whatever gods there be that this horror has yet to appear in the pages of *Preacher*. It's about the only one they've missed.

6. THE X-FILES #1

WRITER: Stefan Petrucha
ARTIST: Charles Adlard

Cannibal cultists running the local meat processing plant? UFOs landing on your roof and screwing with your cable reception? Those nutty Aztecs down the street still doing blood sacrifices at the local playground? Who you gonna call?

Better call the Ghostbusters, 'cause X-Files agents Scully and Mulder never quite get the case solved. Oh, they come close, all right, but that conclusive evidence usually winds up going up in a cloud of smoke. Good thing their comic is high-octane entertainment, 'cause as screen detectives, they could take a lesson or two from Inspector Clouseau.

NUMBER SIX

NUMBER SEVEN

7. HITMAN #1

WRITER: Garth Ennis
ARTIST: John McCrea

Hitman is *Preacher Lite*. Or maybe *PG-13 Preacher*. Or maybe *Li'l Preacher*. It's written by the same Garth Ennis who is the monthly *Preacher* madman, but these DC Universe tales have to be a bit sanitized for Batman's protection. Which is not to put it down a bit. It's still edge-of-your-seat, gritty, dark-side entertainment. You still get the occasional puke scene, and some chick actually used the L-word (that's "love," kiddies) a couple months ago. But if *Hitman* is the training-wheels version of *Preacher*, that's not bad company to be in at all.

NUMBER EIGHT

8. WITCHBLADE #2

WRITERS: David Wohl, Brian Haberlin and Michael Turner
ARTISTS: Michael Turner and D-Tron

One thing you may not have noticed while you were too busy ogling Sara Pezzini's nifty-swell glove or tight red dress (or lack thereof) is the fact that David Wohl and Michael Turner are quickly becoming big names in comics. Every month, as *Witchblade* gets more exposure and more people pick up on the title and even a new Witchblade title is added, more people also become hip to the fact that these guys know how to put together a pretty good funnybook. Don't believe us? Give 'em a try.

9. PREACHER #2

WRITER: Garth Ennis
ARTIST: Steve Dillon

Garth Ennis hails from Northern Ireland, but still has quite an affinity for the American West. He lists "Outlaw Josey Wales" as one of his favorite movies, and John Wayne is a recurring character in *Preacher*. A few years ago, people thought horror was a dead genre in comics. Conventional wisdom still states that Westerns are a comic dead-end. But Ennis proved everyone wrong by putting the two together and coming up with a hit.

We can already hear Marvel getting ready for a *Werewolf By Night Meets The Rawhide Kid* Prestige Format one-shot.

NUMBER NINE

10. ANGELA #1

WRITER: Neil Gaiman
ARTIST: Greg Capullo

Dateline: 1993. Hounded by criticism that he can't write his way out of a wet paper bag even though he can draw the prettiest pictures this side of Alex Ross, Todd McFarlane hires himself a few real writers to scribe *Spawn* #8-#11. *Spawn* #9, written by Neil Gaiman, introduces this chickee by the name of Angela. She proves so popular with the Geeks of America that she spins into her own mini-series, shown right here. Then she gets even *more* popular. Is a new ongoing on the horizon? You bet your ass it is.

NUMBER TEN

THE NEXT TEN

THE NEXT 10 HOT BOOKS AND THE COMPANIES THAT MAKE THEM

11. SHI #1 CRUSADE
12. SPAWN #1 IMAGE
13. DC VS. MARVEL #1 UH...DC/MARVEL
14. AVENGELYNE (MINI-SERIES) #1 MAXIMUM
15. ONSLAUGHT: X-MEN #1 MARVEL
16. KINGDOM COME #2 DC
17. SPAWN #9 IMAGE
18. THE X-FILES #2 TOPPS
19. DETECTIVE COMICS #700 DC
20. WOLVERINE #75 MARVEL

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WIZARD TOP 100

The highest-ordered comic books for the month of AUGUST.

Compiled by the *Wizard* Price Guide staff, and working off the data supplied by comic book retailers across the country, the following is a listing of the highest-ordered comics for August. Check out the column on the right for an explanation of this month's stand-out books (listed in **boldface type**). **(CE=Collector's Edition)**

1. Onslaught: Marvel Universe (Marvel)

2. **DV8 #1 (Image)**
3. Uncanny X-Men #337 (Marvel)
4. X-Men #57 (Marvel)
5. **Wolverine #106 (Marvel)**
6. **Kingdom Come #4 (DC)**
7. **Spawn #53 (Image)**
8. Generation X #20 (Marvel)
9. **Wolverine '96 (Marvel)**
10. **Gen^{13} #13A (Image)**
11. **Gen^{13} #13B (Image)**
12. **Gen^{13} #13C (Image)**
13. X-Man #20 (Marvel)
14. X-Force #59 (Marvel)
15. **Deathblow/Wolverine #1 (Image)**
16. Cable #36 (Marvel)
17. X-Men: The Rise of Apocalypse #1 (Marvel)
18. X-Factor #127 (Marvel)
19. Spawn Bible #1 (Image)
20. Excalibur #102 (Marvel)
21. **X-Men/Star Trek (Marvel)**
22. **Cable & X-Force '96 (Marvel)**
23. **X-Force/Youngblood (Marvel)**
24. **X-Men/ClanDestine #1 (Marvel)**
25. X-Men vs. Brood: Day of Wrath #2 (Mar.)
26. Witchblade #9 (Image)
27. Amazing Spider-Man #416 (Marvel)
28. Spider-Man #73 (Marvel)
29. **Shattered Image #1 (Image)**
30. X-Men: Pryde & Wisdom #2 (Marvel)
31. Sensational Spider-Man #9 (Marvel)
32. Incredible Hulk #445 (Marvel)
33. Spectacular Spider-Man #239 (Marvel)
34. Star Wars: S. of the Empire #4 (D.H.)
35. Dawn #4 (Sirius)
36. **Shattered Image #2 (Image)**
37. Incredible Hulk: Hercules Unleashed (Marvel)
38. Batman #535 CE (DC)
39. WildC.A.T.s #32 (Image)
40. **Nightwing #1 (DC)**
41. **Shattered Image #3 (Image)**
42. **Amazing Spider-Man '96 (Marvel)**
43. Detective Comics #702 (DC)
44. Superman #116 (DC)
45. Spider-Man: Redemption #2 (Marvel)
46. Action Comics #726 (DC)
47. Adventures of Superman #539 (DC)
48. The X-Files #21 (Topps)
49. Supergirl #2 (DC)
50. Superman: The Man of Steel #61 (DC)
51. **Tomoe/Witchblade: Fire Sermon #1 (Crusade)**
52. Marvel Heroes & Legends (Marvel)
53. Superman: The Man of Tomorrow #6 (DC)
54. **Teen Titans #1 (DC)**
55. Batman: Shadow of the Bat #55 (DC)
56. Batman: Leg. of the Dark Knight #87 (DC)
57. Carnage: It's a Wonderful Life (Marvel)
58. **Glory/Avengelyne: The Godyssey (Image)**
59. Preacher Special: Saint of Killers #3 (DC)
60. The X-Files Annual #2 (Topps)
61. Preacher #18 (DC)
62. The Dreaming #5 (DC)
63. Robin #34 (DC)
64. Green Lantern #79 (DC)
65. **What If? #90 (Marvel)**
66. The X-Files: Season One #2 (Topps)
67. The Flash #118 (DC)
68. Catwoman #38 (DC)
69. Action Comics Annual #8 (DC)
70. Uncanny Origins #2 (Marvel)
71. WetWorks #20 (Image)
72. S. Wars: X-Wing R.S.—B. Tat. #3 (D.H.)
73. The Batman Chronicles #6 (DC)
74. Wonder Woman #114 (DC)
75. Justice League: A Mids. Nightmare #2 (DC)
76. The Road to Onslaught Special (Marvel)
77. Cyberforce #26 (Image)
78. **House of Secrets #1 (DC)**
79. **Avengelyne/Glory II: The Godyssey (Max.)**
80. Azrael #22 (DC)
81. Venom: The Hunger #3 (Marvel)
82. Professor Xavier and the X-Men #12 (Marvel)
83. Avengelyne #5 (Maximum)
84. Untold Tales of Spider-Man #14 (Marvel)
85. The Maxx #26 (Image)
86. Weapon Zero #7 (Image)
87. Marvel Fanfare #2 (Marvel)
88. Backlash #23 (Image)
89. 2099: World of Tomorrow #2 (Marvel)
90. Superboy #32 (DC)
91. Grifter #2 (Image)
92. Daredevil #357 (Marvel)
93. **Bloody Mary #1 (DC)**
94. **Lady Death #1: Encore Presentation (Chaos!)**
95. Pitt: In the Blood #1 (Full Bleed)
96. Classic Star Wars: Devilworlds #1 (D.H.)
97. Dark Chylde #3 (Maximum)
98. Savage Dragon #31 (Image)
99. Artemis: Requiem #5 (DC)
100. **K. Busiek's Astro City (Vol. 2) #1 (Homage)**

AT THE TOP:

While the multi-hero, megaimportant *Onslaught: Marvel Universe*'s ranking at #1 was as expected as its "Heroes Reborn" lead-in conclusion, orders for the Gen^{13} spinoff *DV8* #1 surpassed the market's already-high expectations. Fans and collectors obviously see this new superteam as the next Gen^{13}, and gave this issue (which had eight equal-quantity variants) the highest showing for a non-Spawn Image book in years. Speaking of Spawnie, while *Kingdom Come*'s long-awaited closer edged him out, Wolverine's been beating him chart-wise for almost a year (not counting *Spawn* #50), and he's done it again—makes you wonder who fans recognize more. Meanwhile, the total orders of Gen^{13}'s special three-part issue would have beaten both of these guys, and every other book—it would've been August's top seller. *Deathblow/Wolverine* brought the deceased Image soldier of fortune his highest numbers, and may help incite readers into a campaign for his return. This year's Marvel annuals (guised as "'96" books) as a whole fared much better than DC's set, possibly because the Marvel stories kept the characters in continuity while DC's didn't.

IN THE MIDDLE:

Whether they're surprised or saddened by its happening, Trekkies should cheer for the X-Men/Star Trek crossover, which went to order realms where no Trek book has gone before. This month's other mutant crossovers helped out their co-starring groups, like Marvel's low-selling ClanDestine—maybe DC should copy this smart Marvel move with a *Preacher/Firebrand* or *Batman/Starman* book. Although intracompany crossovers are getting passé, *Shattered Image*'s teaming of all the company's heroes took in fairly strong orders. Nightwing finally scored a series, and a solid ranking.

IN THE SECOND HALF:

While the Tomoe/Witchblade team-up brought in the heroines' regular numbers, the latest two-issue Glory/Avengelyne crossover flew Glory to her highest level in several months. The Titans know this feeling as well, thanks to fan fave Dan Jurgens' work on their new title. Several summer successes round out the chart: An alternate universe's Cyclops and Havok blasted *What If?* up 28 spots; *House of Secrets'* #78 ranking is pretty good for a horror book, as well as a Vertigo product; *Bloody Mary* #1 made a commendable showing for DC's new Helix imprint; the Lady Death book came in pretty high for a reprint; and *Astro City*, Homage's first offering, made the chart.

ATTENTION COMIC BOOK RETAILERS:

If you're a retailer who would like to participate in our compiling of the *Wizard* Top 100 (and be a candidate for special prizes), please write to us at the address below.

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MARKET WATCH

COMIC MARKET NEWS AND SUCH · by Jon Warren & the *Wizard* staff

FIRST COMING OF ONSLAUGHT

Will the real first appearance of Onslaught please stand up?

It seems there's been tons of confusion as to when Onslaught (below) really reared his ugly head. Many readers believe his first showing was actually in *Amazing X-Men* #3, during "The Age of Apocalypse." It appears that when Bishop was going through his mindscan, a figure that looks not unlike Onslaught appears in the montage. Not so, says Marvel Editor-in-Chief Bob Harras.

"The picture in *Amazing X-Men* #3 is actually from the first time Charles Xavier fought the Shadow King," Harras says. "Shadow King originally appeared back in *Uncanny X-Men* #117. It is very possible that the memory of that image had inspired Xavier to choose that image for the Onslaught costume."

So, as it stands, the first full appearance of Onslaught is still *X-Men* #53.

Onslaught's kinda miffed that his first appearance wasn't *Secret Wars II* #6

Preacher Debate

Preacher is showing the second sign of a long-lasting hit (the first being great sales figures and hot back issues): an ongoing, emphatic, partisan debate about it in the fan press.

There are those who think the DC/Vertigo title is the best, most adult book ever, while people on the other end of the spectrum think it is self-indulgent crap.

The *Preacher* supporters say that its mature themes are never gratuitous. "Sure it's violent," says Jared Ricker, of Pasadena, Calif. "But it's never overdone because it makes you laugh at how ridiculous it can get. Just when you think you've seen the most disgusting act of violence, Ennis and Dillon will shock you all over again. It's entertaining."

Bob Dixon of Tampa Bay, Fla., says the same of the book's profanity. "There are tons of books out there that just cuss and cuss, but *Preacher*'s dialogue is so natural because people really speak that way."

Of course, there are *Preacher*'s naysayers. "Every other word is an f-word, and every other panel is a guy getting his face ripped off or in an obscene sexual act," says Rich Fornel of Boston. "I guess I'm in the minority, but I just can't believe this stuff is popular."

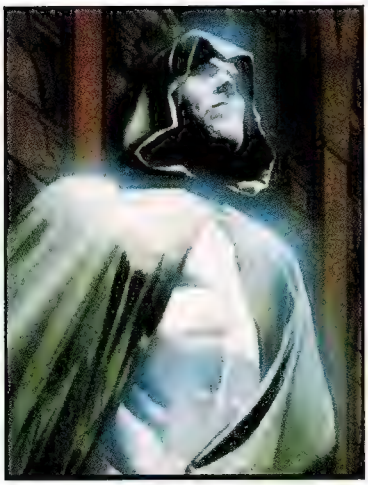
Art Martucci of Chicago says plainly, "I'll just stick with Superman."

No matter where you stand, you have to admit the controversial *Preacher* is a thought-provoking book, one which is deservedly hot and coveted by collectors. Even the existence of a trade paperback reprinting the first few issues has failed to slow the title's price activity. People may be heavily talking about *Preacher*, but they're also heavily buying it.

Kingdom Come: Fans Have Spoken

Kingdom Come was a undeniable hit, right? Or was it?

Now that the long-awaited series is done, *Kingdom Come*'s popularity has proven that it lived up to the hype. Sure, it sold a bazillion copies. Sure, fans dug Mark Waid's sharp dialogue and thrilled to see Alex Ross tackle DC's big guns. But it ain't all sweetness and light, many fans say.



Did *Kingdom Come* give fans enough?

Some have commented that Waid's storyline occasionally lost its way, lapsing into the overdramatic, and that the ending seemed contrived. Other criticisms include the fact that characters like Flash, Green Lantern and Hawkman were wasted, and that you learned more about them (among other things) through Fleer/SkyBox's *Kingdom Come* trading card set. A few fans say they enjoyed the card set more than the book itself. "So much in the comics went unexplained," says Keith Flynn, a New York-based fan. "You needed the card set to find out many heroes and villains' names."

Joseph Moses of Sacremento, Calif., agrees. "I really wanted to know what happened between Batman and Red Robin, and how Flash got to be the way he is—and I don't even know if the Flash is Wally West or not. I left the series unfulfilled."

There was no characterization, says Mich.-based Tom Doherty. "You're misled by the covers, thinking that this is a big DC Universe story, and it's really just a Superman story. There's so many interesting characters in the story that you know absolutely nothing about, so why should I be expected to care about what happens to them?"

Despite the criticisms, all four issues of *Kingdom Come* remain very hot, so the book must've done something right. Many retailers sold out of their copies, even on reorder, so don't expect to find piles of them in back issue boxes. If you missed any or all of the issues, your best bet is to pick them up now, because they'll surely go up in value.

And, hey, it kinda makes you crave that rumored hardcover with all-new Alex Ross pages. Who knows? Maybe it'll clear up some of the confusion. W

Chattanooga-based writer Jon Warren thinks Jughead *is a very controversial book.*

Wizard's Top 10 Hottest Writers

1 **Garth Ennis**
Preacher, Hitman

2 **Mark Waid**
Kingdom Come, Flash

Al Ortega

3 **Peter David**
Hulk, Aquaman

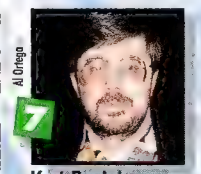
Al Ortega

4 **Neil Gaiman**
Sandman

J. Schuyler

5 **Scott Lobdell**
Generation X, Uncanny X-Men

6 **Karl Kesel**
Daredevil



Al Ortega

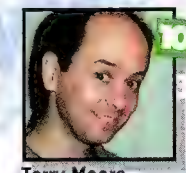
7 **Kurt Busiek**
Astro City

J. Schuyler

8 **Ron Marz**
Green Lantern

Al Ortega

9 **James Robinson**
Starman



10 **Terry Moore**
Strangers in Paradise

Wizard's Top 10 Hottest Artists

Al Ortega

1 **Todd McFarlane**
Spawn

Al Ortega

2 **Jim Lee**
Fantastic Four

Gabe Palacio

3 **Joe Madureira**
Uncanny X-Men

Al Ortega

4 **Alex Ross**
Kingdom Come

5 **J. Scott Campbell**
Gen[13]

6 **Joe Linsner**
Dawn

7 **Billy Tucci**
Shi

Al Ortega

8 **Joe Quesada**
Ash

9 **Humberto Ramos**
Impulse

10 **Mike Wieringo**
Sensational Spider-Man

***Wizard*'s Top Ten Hottest Writers and Artists lists are derived from a nationwide retailer survey.**

Wizard's Up & Coming Creator

CARLOS PACHECO

This artist, who had stints on *Fantastic Four* and *Excalibur* and is said to be taking over an X-Men title, produces lively stories with a clean style suited for Marvel's characters. He also uses very interesting perspectives, adding to his work's almost animated look. *FF* and *Excalibur* editor Suzanne Gaffney says, "Carlos really knows the characters—how each of them would stand, sit and play with their hair; he brings the dimension of body language to the page. He has a great imaginative mind with a natural sense of design, and he doesn't lose storytelling at the expense of a splash page." ■ *Marc Wilkofsky*

survey: issue 63

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & CONCERNS

We want to know what you like about this li'l mag of ours. Tell us what you thought about this particular issue of *WIZARD*, what you liked best, and what sucked sour frog ass. (Use extra paper if you're one of them long-winded types.)

PRICE CHANGES

Are books selling in your area for a lot more or a lot less than *WIZARD* is listing them at?
If they are, we wanna know. List any major discrepancies you feel exist in the *WIZARD* price guide.
(Use extra paper if necessary.)

Title	Issue #	What it sells for in your area

TOP TEN HOTTEST COMICS

What do you see as the hottest comics among the circle of friends you hang out with? List them below, with the hottest book at the number one slot.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

Who is your favorite comic book artist? Actually, we wanna know who your top 10 favorite artists are. List your favorite artist in the number one slot, followed by your second favorite artist, etc.

1.
2.
3.
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5.
6.
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8.
9.
10.

TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

Hang in there; we're almost done. What we need now is the list of your 10 favorite comic book writers.
You know the drill: your favorite in pole position, with your second favorite at number two, yadda, yadda, yadda.

1.
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10.

GOLDEN AGE PRICE GUIDE LISTINGS

We'd like to know how you all feel about these. Do you think we should leave them in the Price Guide to be more complete, or should we use the space for additional Modern Age books? Let us know which option you think makes for a better guide. Thanks.

let your voice be heard

WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

We need your help. Y'see, the only way to keep improving the WIZARD price guide is to keep in touch with the thousands of comic book fans that make this industry what it is. So, we need you to take a couple of minutes and fill out the survey on the left and mail this page to us. And heck, by helping us make a better mag, you'll *get* a better mag! (See? It all works out in the end.) Oh, and feel free to photocopy this page if you don't feel like destroying this issue.

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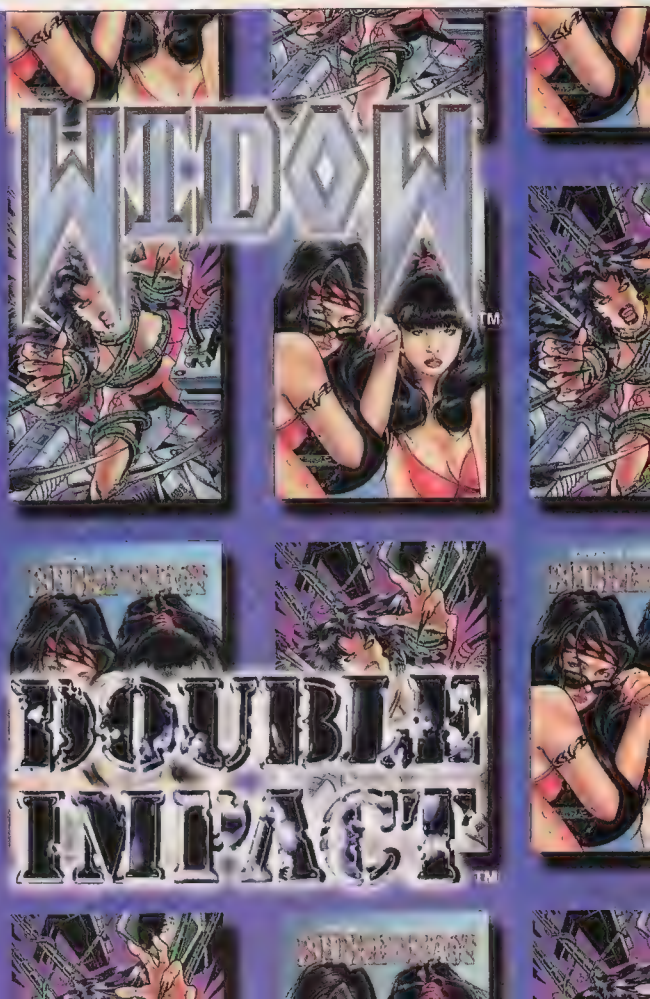


BULL PEN

Former Mort of the Month the Ten-Eyed Man invites you into the new "Bullpen"

C.B.I.Q.

Games, puzzles and stuff that'll tickle your fummy with the taste of nuts and honey

comic book intelligence quotient

Halloween is a scary time, kids. But nothing's scarier-looking than a really bad costume. So this month, we'll be grading your very sanity against some of the most frightening costume faux pas ever made. The higher your score, the more atrocious the costume.

Score	Rank
0-4	**Captain Boomerang:** Y'know, he looks kinda like one of those airline stewards your mom is always warning you about.
5-14	**Mr. Terrific:** This guy had "Fair Play" written on his tummy. He was just beggin' for a shot to li'l Mr. Terrific.
15-19	**The Vanisher:** Oh, this X-Men villain could vanish, all right, but his bald ass would just pop up again in that same damn green bozo wig. Very disturbing.
20	**Clock King:** A clock for a face—need we say more? (Oh no! It's 8:43!!)

1. Why did Wolverine kill Rachel Van Helsing, the great-granddaughter of vampire-slayer Abraham Van Helsing?

A) Van Helsing was planning on resuscitating Dracula and the only way to stop her was killing her.

B) A hypnotized Van Helsing was about to destroy a small Romanian village. Attempting to prevent this, Wolverine accidentally killed her.

C) Van Helsing, a vampire, asked Wolverine to end her damned existence, and Wolvie complied.

D) After reading the last several years worth of Wolverine comics, Rachel commented, "Hey, this is all convoluted craARGGH…*," right before Wolvie cut her short.

2. What was the name of the vampire that Batman and Superman fought in the little bayou town of Fayerville?

A) Obadiah Stane
B) Zachariah Boggs
C) Elly Mae Skaggs
D) Pele, the weak-bladdered Howler Monkey

3. In *Spawn: Blood Feud,* what job did John Sansker the vampire use as a cover to endear himself to the public?

A) He had a reputation as a quite successful monster hunter.

B) To feed on the blood of the young, he became a lovable clown named Pennywise.

C) He became a rich politician known for his philanthropic work for the poor, whom he would then harvest for their blood.

D) He used his Vampiric powers to become a popular pro athelete.

4. Which of the following superbeings becomes stronger during a full moon as the result of being bitten by a werewolf, and yet does not become a true werewolf?

A) Man-Wolf
B) Moon Knight
C) Wolfsbane
D) The Night Man

6. In the fourth "Simpsons Halloween Special," when Homer's soul was on trial, who was not on the jury of the damned?

A) Josef Stalin
B) Richard Nixon
C) Benedict Arnold
D) the starting line of the 1976 Philadelphia Flyers

7. Where did the Scarlet Witch get her bitchin' bewitchin' powers?

A) She was trained by the Sorcerer Supreme, Dr. Strange.

B) She is from a dimension where everyone practices magic.

C) She uses several magical items, including the Eye of Agamotto.

D) She was trained by the witch Agatha Harkness, and is also a mutant who can alter probabilities through the use of her hex-spheres.

8. Ghost Rider is such a cool and scarifying name, that it's been used by several characters, except for…

A) Hamilton Slade.
B) Slade Wilson.
C) Johnny Blaze.
D) Danny Ketch.

9. Which DC superteam had a vampire as an original member?

A) Outsiders
B) Blood Syndicate
C) Sovereign Seven
D) Team Titans

10. Which scary villain whacked Spider-Man's main squeeze, Gwen Stacy?

A) Mysterio
B) Green Goblin
C) Jack O'Lantern
D) Kangaroo (Hey…the fact that somebody actually created this character is pretty damn scary.)

11. Batman's foe, the Scarecrow, has induced fear in his victims by several methods. What is one method he has not used?

A) a fear-inducing gas
B) controlled psychic telepathy causing intense fear
C) high-frequency waves transmitted by electronic devices
D) fear-inducing pheromone chemicals

12. In the pages of *WetWorks,* what is name of the capital city of the Vampire Nation?

A) Timisoara, Transylvania
B) Dras 'Adin
C) Attilan
D) Hollywood, California

13. What mysterious relic is the Trickster supposed to steal in *Impulse* #14?

A) The Devil's Face
B) The Eye of God
C) The Monkey's Paw
D) The Clover of St. Patrick

14. Which Avenger was once turned into a werewolf?

A) Captain America
B) Beast
C) Quicksilver
D) Vision

15. What's the name of Lady Death's equally busty, bloodsucking nemesis?

A) Mephista
B) Lady Satanna
C) Purgatori
D) Mosquito-Bite Molly

16. Who is the zombie master of the Marvel Universe?

A) Brother Voodoo
B) Houngan
C) Black Talon
D) Papa Doc Duvalier

17. What do Morbius, Man-Bat and Vampirella have in common?

A) They are all alien to Earth.
B) They are all vampires.
C) None are true vampires in the Gothic sense.
D) They all prefer potatoes over Stove-Top stuffing. Hmm…curious.

18. Which character recently went to Hell and literally had his face ripped off?

A) Savage Dragon
B) ShadowHawk
C) Backlash
D) Spawn

19. In *Batman* #530, Bats teams up with what spooky character to find out who is stealing Incan treasures?

A) Phantom Stranger
B) The Demon
C) Deadman
D) Bob Dole

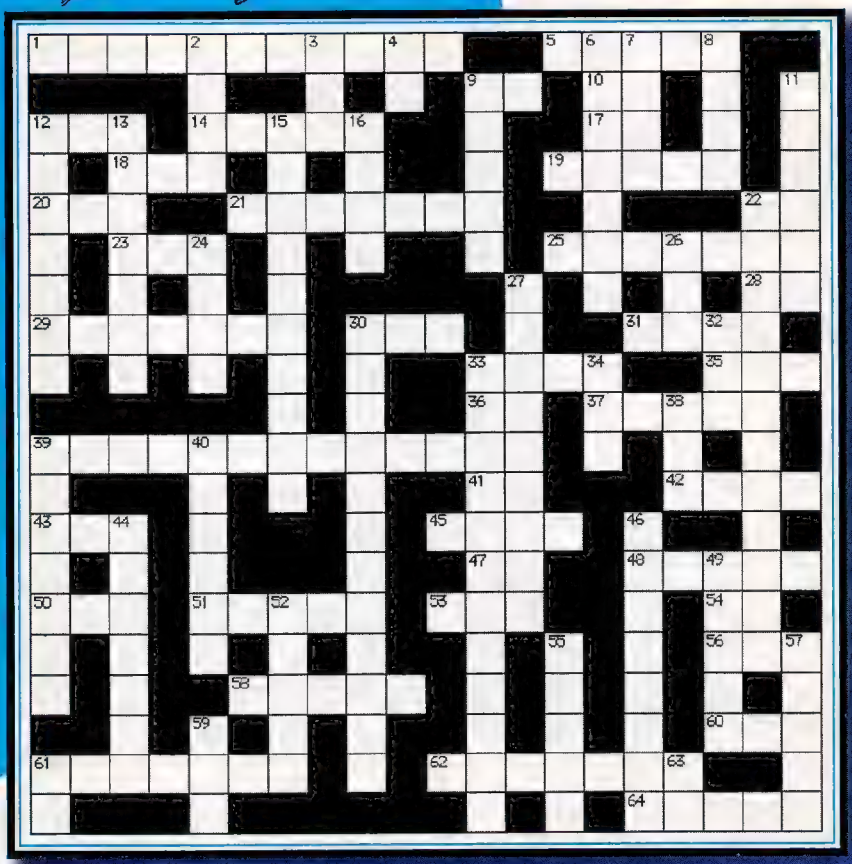
20. Which four monsters were part of the Legion of Monsters?

A) Morbius, Werewolf, Ghost Rider and Man-Thing
B) Frankenstein, Mummy, Golem and Fin Fang Foom
C) The Abomination, Wendigo, Zzzax and the Missing Link
D) Burns-when-I-urinate-Lad, If-you-don't-stop-tickling-me-I'm-gonna-crap-my-shorts-Man, I-gotta-go-so-bad-I-can-taste-it-Boy and I-don't-remember-eating-that-Man.

WIZARD CROSSWORD

you know, across, down, that sort of stuff

TOO TOUGH?
Don't have an aneurism.
The answers are on page 214.



1. 46 down's disease
5. Jason Blood
9. "Go, Speed Racer, ___!"
10. JLA foe ___ Morrow
12. "Nightmare on Elm Street" director, ___ Craven
14. Zatanna practices this art
17. Main Doom rival; initials
18. Angel and the ___
19. Green Lantern dies in DC's *Final* _____
20. 43 across' first name
21. "The Living Vampire"
22. Where you'll find Rick Jones
23. Belasco's demon servant
25. Looker is now one
28. *Kingdom Come* artist; init.
29. Jack Ryder
30. ___ Fang Foom
31. Banshee's first name
33. Obsidian's powerful sister
35. Maxx's mischievous foes
36. Female Vampirella artist; init.
37. Negative Man looks like this
39. 2099er Meanstreak's Vegas buddy
41. Astro City builder; init.
42. Magda Lehnsherr's midwife
43. First artist of *X-Men 2099*
45. Destiny holds this
47. Evil clone; init.
48. Kid Death's company
50. Spider-Man's first name
51. Joker sets these for Batman
53. Catwoman's least favorite mammal
54. Wonder Woman's nickname
56. What Ra's al Ghul is to Talia
58. WetWorker Crossbones' last name
60. Spider-School; init.
61. Frankenstein's monster, circa 1931
62. Foe of X-Men and Vampirella
64. How Atlanteans destroy Earth 2099

2. Superheroes must have a code _____
3. Deceased Future Force leader
4. Other Spider-Man; init.
6. 5 across' other name
7. Last Galactus herald
8. Kang's short warrior
9. Elisa Cameron
11. Metal that kills werewolves
12. Led Infinity Watch
13. Spawn's vampire enemy
15. Danny Keich
16. 32 down's weapon; Cosmic _____
22. 62 across' homeland
24. Saved Superman after his trial
26. His horror novels have become comics
27. Medusa's husband
30. Mary Shelley's doctor
32. Marvel terrorist group
33. Global Guardians leader
34. Shortest WildC.A.T.
38. another name for X-Files; init.
39. Dark Horse paranormal investigator
40. A Morlock can be considered this
44. Mole Man's home, _____ Isle
46. Jack Russell is one
49. Bacchus' creator, _____ Campbell
52. Hate-Monger I's first name
55. Hex-using heroine, Scarlet _____
57. Mystic Avenger, Dr. _____
59. *Batman: ___ of the Demon*
61. Ninja Turtles creator; init.
63. Spawn's first name

TOP 10 HEROES & VILLAINS OF THE MONTH

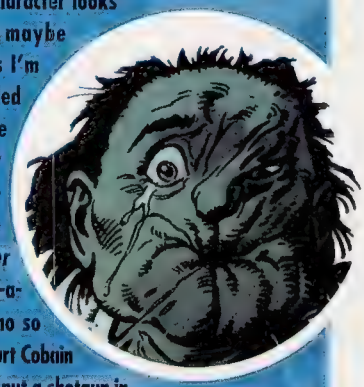
To mark the return of this joyous column, we're deviating from the regular "here's the top 10 hottest characters" to bring you the top 10 characters who are fairly unpleasant to look at.

1. AUNT MAY'S CORPSE

Oooo...betcha chunks of her fall in the batter when she's making Petey his wheatcakes. Even more unpleasant than that thought is this one: We gotta own up to a bad call. Back in *Wiz* #45 we ran the Top 10 heroes and villains we wanna see dead, and ol' Aunt May clocked in at #1. Our mistake. Just like Superman needs his Ma and Pa Kent and Batman needs his Alfred, Spidey needs his kindly, advice-full Aunt May. We goofed for wanting her dead and Marvel goofed with making her dead. What they shoulda done is offed MJ. Luckless sad sack Peter Parker should not have a supermodel wife or any bratty kids. It's just not in his character.

2. ARSEFACE

In a day and age where superhero names don't even come close to matching the way a character looks ("I'm Deathblade...or maybe Shadowfist...or perhaps I'm Eduardo the Runny-Stooled Avenger..."), there's one new character who really stands out in a crowd: Arseface. Straight from the insanely violent *Preacher* title, Arseface was a dime-a-dozen stupid teenager who so swooned over Nirvana's Kurt Cobain that when he heard Cobain put a shotgun in his mouth and blew his brains out, he tried the same. The difference being that Arseface lived, but screwed up his face so bad he even makes Michael Jackson pause and say "eww..." (and that's not just 'cause he's over 11).



3. DEADMAN

Whoa...looks like ol' Boston Brand here just caught himself in his fly. Bummer. Heck, the only thing more painful than catching your li'l buddy in the saw-toothed denim flap of death would probably be getting shot through the heart and taking a 100-foot tumble through the air to go splat on the ground. Sound unpleasant? It gets worse. Toss in getting resurrected as a ghost, along with knowing you'll never feel the touch of another human being, never share a laugh with someone you love, and never hold in your hands a copy of a "Heroes Reborn" comic (*sigh*), and you've got yourself a pretty bum deal. With that little ray of sunshine story in his résumé, it's no wonder Deadman looks like a strung-out, hairless, tapeworm-filled albino Jeff Goldblum.

4. TWO-FACE

"We've washed half of Harvey Dent's face with ordinary soap and water and the other with new Oxy 10 To The Hundredth Power...can you tell which side is which?" Not pleasant. No sir. Not at all. Anyways, ol' Two-Face here used to be crack D.A. Harvey Dent, until a mobster chucked some acid in his face, royally screwing up his looks and not doing such a hot job to his already shaky psyche, either. Now obsessed with the number two (like robbing Gotham's Second National Bank on February 2nd at 2 a.m.) and letting his coin make his decisions for him (the scarred side comes up and he pops a cap in your coolie, the non-scarred side comes up and you're hunky-dory), one thing stands out above all others: Shaving's gotta be an adventure for this guy.

5. SCARLET SPIDER

Aaaaahhhhh! Ahhhhhhhhhh!! Get it away! Get it away!! In mercy's name, move on to number six! Move on to NUMBER SIX!!!

6. MODOK

Geez...Modok not only fell out of the ugly tree and hit every branch on the way down, but this li'l feller got run over by the ugly truck when he landed. Who was his agent handling what superpower he got? "No, he doesn't want superstrength or invulnerability—just give him a giant potato head, shrivel up his body and let him get his ass kicked by losers." To top that off, Modok had the pleasure of having his throat ripped out by the Serpent Society, dying, getting reanimated by AIM, getting blown up to itty-bitty pieces and...well, that's the end.

7. CORINTHIAN

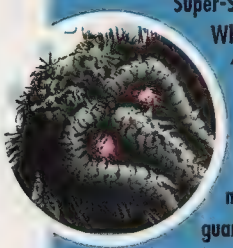
Well, what's so unpleasant about...yaaah!! Geez, how disturbing would it be watching this guy floss? Or getting a cavity filled? Or just eating oatmeal as fast as he can? Created by Morpheus (read: DC's Sandman) to be "the darkness," the embodiment of everything humanity would not confront about itself, ol' halitosis-eyes here was flawed. When Morpheus was captured and imprisoned on Earth for alla them years, the Corinthian escaped to Earth and became a notorious serial killer, inspiring others to embark on murderous crime sprees as well. Well, Morpheus eventually escaped his prison and went about righting everything that went wrong in his absence, including putting the big kibosh on the Corinthian.

8. JONAH HEX

I wonder how tough it must be scoring with chicks when you've got a boiled egg for an eye? "Hey, baby...wanna see me squirt eye pus five feet into that guy's drink?" Mmmm...no, probably not. Maybe he just impresses them with the story of how he got that unsightly facial blemish. "Listen, baby, I haven't gotten any since I betrayed the Indians who raised me and they stuck a piping-hot blade in my kisser for it. So whadda you say—wanna cut me a break and go play hide-the-covered-wagon?" Nah, that'd probably get him no more than a lonely night on the plains, doing weird things to prairie dog holes.

9. MAN-THING

Yeah, okay, Man-Thing is a weak Swamp Thing rip-off and there's yet to be a readable story with this guy in it, but you gotta give him one thing: He is one butt-ugly SOB. Here's the scoop: Ted Sallis was a S.H.I.E.L.D. scientist who attempted to recreate the Super-Soldier serum that gave us Captain America. When the nefarious group AIM tried to snare his "secret recipe"—a modified version of the serum—he injected the only sample of it into himself and fled into a swamp, where a mystical-chemical combo transformed him into a misshapen, mute creature. He became the guardian of the "Nexus of Realities," which just happened to be in that swamp, and now pops up in about one random Marvel comic a year (Just look for the cover blurb, "You won't *believe* this issue's guest-star!").



10. THAT GUY'S HEAD

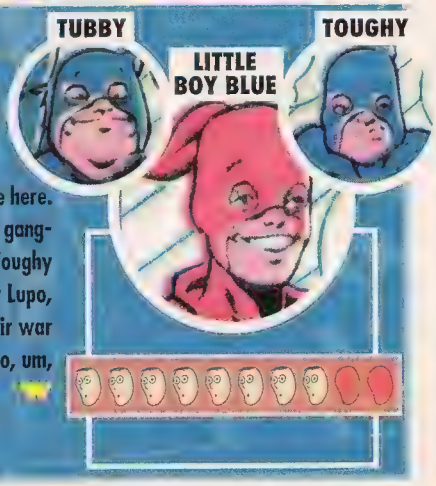
Oh, look, somebody punched Liam Gallagher, lead singer of Oasis, through the head. Damn. And he was so talented. (*sob*) Now we'll never hear more genius-inspired garbage like "Champagne Supernova" or—what? That's not Liam? Is it Kathie Lee Gifford, then? No? Just some loser mobster guy that the Violator killed and later used as a hand puppet? Wow. What a letdown. For the finale, we wanted to go out with a bang, but this is what we get? "Some nameless guy at the end of the Violator's arm"? Talk about ending something with a whimper. Sheesh.

MORT OF THE MONTH

Now it's time to look at the lamest character of the month, or, as we like to call 'em, the Mort of the Month!

LITTLE BOY BLUE (AND THE BLUE BOYS)

We're going to restrain ourselves from making off-color comments on little Blue's name here. We'll just jump right in to the set-up: Teenager Tommy Rogers, determined to take down gangster Wolf Lupo (Lupo being Italian for wolf—clever, eh?), enlisted his pals Tubby and Toughy (Tubby had low self-esteem) to help him bust up Lupo's gang. With their success over Lupo, Tommy and his friends (including the low-self-esteem fat one) decided to continue their war against crime and, with the aid of the mysterious Little Miss Redhead, went on to...to, um, not do much and get overlooked by continuity historians. Including the fat kid.



BULL PEN

No Joy in Wizardville

He's defiled the last Wizard Press toilet.

After almost three years, *Wizard: TGTC*'s Managing Editor Scott Gramling is moving on. (The good news being that Scott, a colossal sports fan, will be heading up a new hockey magazine called *Slapshot*, due out in January from the folks over at Harris Publications. Check it out.)

So, on Scott's fateful last day, after the monster entire-staff lunch at the best Mexican restaurant on Earth (El Bandido in Spring Valley, N.Y.), after the gifts and cards were handed out, after the cases of cheap beer were unwrapped, all eyes fell upon one last package, special-delivery, from Brian Douglas Ahern (y'know, the fella responsible for our spiffy monthly *Wizard* calendars). As tensions built, Scott unwrapped the box, grabbed the contents and fled to another room. An impatient murmur washed over the crowd, and Scott returned, decked out in Ahern's farewell gift...a complete Bumpkin Buzz outfit (a character Ahern made famous in the weekly *Comics Buyer's Guide* newspaper). When the dust finally cleared from all the laughter (and Scott finally tracked down his real clothes after they were...borrowed), Scott had his final words of wisdom to impart on the inhabitants of the *Wizard* Zoo: "I'm really gonna miss working at *Wizard*...and not just because of the free food every other week. Smooshing fellow employees in full-contact *Twister*, snarfing down 66 pieces of sushi and inheriting the bathrobe of a famous comic artist—those are just a few of the shining moments I won't soon forget."

Joy in Wizardville

He's such a sweetie.

'Twas a fair, moonlit night when Design Manager (and master of all things hair) Steve Blackwell and his sweetie Jen King went for a carriage ride 'round NYC's Central Park, quietly snacking on a box of Cracker Jacks. There, beneath a cool starlight summer sky (filled with the echoing cries of doomed tourists), Jen reached into the box and, instead of pulling out tattoos, a magnifying glass or some other weird crap, pulled out a BIG friggin' engagement ring. "Will you marry me?" was the second half of Steve's one-two punch. Shame she said no and Steve, heartbroken, shaved his head, got breast implants and now works as a Vegas showgirl doing two shows a night (three on Sunday).

No, wait...that's how the rest of the *Wizard* Staff spent Labor Day weekend. Jen said yes, Steve survived his bachelor party (which the *Wizard* lawyers say we can't talk about) and the two were wed on Sunday, September 1, followed by a two-week honeymoon in beautiful, sunny Aruba. Steve had this to say about his marriage: "I'm looking forward to this, my marriage, as being the next step on the path to world conquest. That, and getting to spend the rest of my days with the perfect woman." Awww...

WIZARD TOP TEN

Breaking tradition, the following Top 10 is 100%, swear-to-God true. With that said...

Top 10 most frightening things about working at Wizard Press

10. The pubic-hair bird nests in the urinals.
9. The angry, enormously endowed dog that marks his scent on a different car in our parking lot every morning.
8. The pair of origin-unknown, black-and-purple panties dangling from the Nightcrawler figure in the hallway.
7. *Wiz* Editor Andrew Kardon's collection of patchwork Mego dolls, all in various states of undress, doing...things to each other.
6. The fruit flies in the lunchroom that seem to have gained group-sentience.
5. The "Ghost of Flatulence Past" that haunts the men's room, which, even if you just go in to wash your hands, will cling to you for the rest of the day and make you smell like you've crapped yourself.
4. Staffer Marc Wilkofsky.
3. The car in our parking lot that has written on its side—no lie—"Maxxin' and Relaxxin'."
2. The Twinkie thumb-tacked to the ceiling that's been here longer than most of us have.
1. Hefty staffer Buddy Scalera lifting his shirt and exposing, in the middle of a conversation and with absolutely no provocation, why he's called "The Other White Meat."

CONTEST WINNERS

NEIL GAIMAN, ISSUE #58:
Rob Stilson, San Leandro, Calif.
Here are the answers:
1. Matthew Cable 2. Hob Gadling 3. "Whole Wide World" 4. Goldie 5. *Stardust*

MANGA, #56:
Michelle Ballert, Sonoma, Calif.

SONY PLAYSTATION, #58:
Kenneth Siebert, Renton, Wash.

STRANGERS IN PARADISE, #58:
Dave Setlik, North Tonawanda, N.Y.

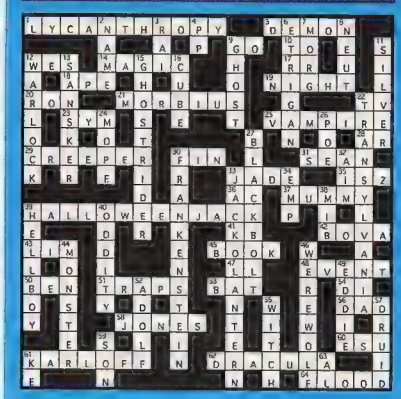
C.B.I.Q. answers...

from page 210

1. C	6. A	10. B	14. A	18. D
2. C	7. D	11. B	15. C	19. C
3. A	8. B	12. B	16. C	20. A
4. B	9. D	13. B	17. D	

CROSSWORD answers...

from page 211



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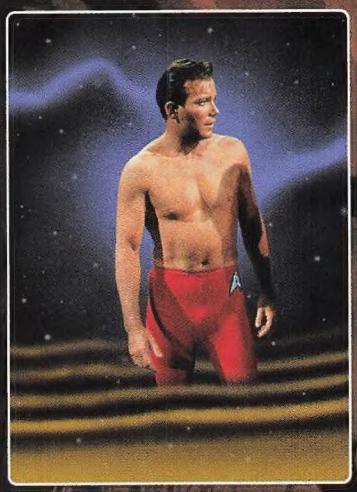

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WIZARD profile

Here's looking at...

WARRIOR

"The testimonial in my life is that I was voted Least Likely to Succeed by my high school graduating class," reveals the 37-year-old wrestling superstar turned comic creator, now known simply as Warrior.

Behind huge biceps and a low, gruff voice, a focused and intensive mind explains, "My father left when I was 12 years old and my mother didn't have any self-esteem, so she instilled that in her kids too. It was only in quiet times sitting and crying to myself that I realized if I wanted to do anything, I was responsible for being the one to get it done."

After getting his act together, the Williamsport, Ind., native made it through chiropractic school and was working out at a California gym when he was asked if he'd like to give professional wrestling a try. Hoping to make some quick cash to pay back his loans, Warrior and a friend drove down to Tennessee and competed in a small wrestling territory.

"We were thinking we were gonna have all kinds of fun and life's gonna be grand. But for the next three years, we slept on the floor and ate tuna fish outta the can."

Following a number of stints in various territories, the Ultimate Warrior finally made it to the World Wrestling Federation, where he skyrocketed to stardom. "The biggest highlight of my career was beating Hulk Hogan fair and square by a pin-fall 1-2-3, in the middle of the ring at the Toronto Skydome at 'Wrestlemania VI' for the heavyweight championship belt. It was the handing of the torch, so to speak."

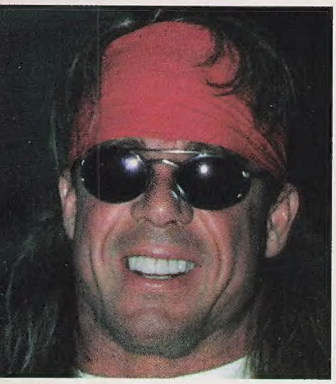

Photo courtesy of Warrior

For the next few years, the Ultimate Warrior was "it" in the WWF, even with his sporadic absences due to personal issues. But after a three-year hiatus, he recently returned and started his own comic. As he puts it, "The Ultimate Warrior is always talked about as if he walked off the pages of a comic." To get his message across, a comic book was the perfect solution.

"It wasn't enough anymore to go out and say to a kid, 'Okay, just believe in yourself.' It had to have a definition to it—which is the coming about of my true-to-life beliefs. I call it 'destrucity,' making a truce between your destiny and your reality. I went back and came up with eight things that have influenced me in my life, and they are the disciplines of destrucity."

In the ongoing *Warrior* comic from Ultimate Creations, the Ultimate Warrior's physical body has gone into a coma, so he now must make his way through the Terrain of Testament and face eight physical representations of the disciplines of destrucity. November's *Designs of Destrucity* one-shot will be a collaboration of eight artists, each doing two-page splashes of the disciplines the Warrior faces.

Hoping to one day bring his creation to the animated front, the Warrior must first, however, make it in a somewhat tumultuous market.

"The comic industry is in such turmoil, where there's too many knives being thrown instead of people pulling them out and putting sheaths on them. I've a message I'm really trying to express to everyone in the industry: I'm here to help out if I can."

by Andrew Kardon

First comic read...
Probably a *Batman* comic.

Favorite comic of all time...
Pitt

Comics you read...
Frank Miller's *Sin City*, *Spawn*, *Pitt*

The one person you'd like to meet...
Arnold Schwarzenegger

Superpower you would most want...
To be able to project my thoughts on the wall. So many times I get frustrated in trying to express my ideas.

Favorite toy as a kid and as an adult...
As a kid, go-carts and mini-bikes. As an adult, my Harley and four-wheel drive truck.

Things you collect...
Over the course of the last year and a half I've started collecting all sorts of Ultimate Warrior merchandise, only because it's part of my life. I didn't realize how much stuff there is.

Favorite pastime or hobby...
As of late, it's been reading comics.

Favorite TV show...
Kramer on "Seinfeld." Just Kramer. All I gotta do is see him come walking through that door of the apartment and I've lost it. He's just so funny.

Last costume you wore on Halloween...
It may have been the Incredible Hulk. I was probably 9.

Person who would play you in a movie about yourself...
I'd want someone with the physical presence like an Arnold, but with the harsh sense of humor like an Andrew Dice Clay.

Favorite cartoon...
"Mr. Magoo"

Person you would most like to work with...
Todd McFarlane

Favorite wrestling move...
My flying tackle

Toughest match...
The Hulk Hogan match from "Wrestlemania VI"

If you had the power of the Beyonder...
I'd make people realize that they're responsible for the rights and wrongs, their opinions and the living of their lives. They are entitled to make their own choices. W

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